JUDAS MACCABÆUS

SKETCH MAP OF PALESTINE,

Showing places connected with the History of Judas Maccabæus.

JUDAS MACCABÆUS

AND THE

Jewish War of Independence

BY

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"Can these bones live?"

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PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

THE First Edition of "Judas Maccabæus" appeared in 1879, and was well received. During the fourteen years that have followed I had not had occasion to look at its pages, until the present edition was called for; but I am glad to find little to correct, though much might be added. During this interval I have revisited many of the scenes described; have lived in Moab, and have ridden through the oak woods of Gilead. In the resting times, between more active years, I have had occasion to study more completely the subjects touched on in this volume, and further discoveries in Palestine have cast some new light on the period. Our main sources of knowledge, however, remain the same—the First Book of Maccabees, and the Antiquities of Josephus.

In calling the books of the Bible by those names by which they were known to Judas and his contemporaries, I do not wish to express any opinion as to modern criticism regarding their dates or authorship. I speak of them as a Jew in Maccabean times might

be supposed to have done. I have been unable to understand the force of the argument which would make so large a proportion of the Hebrew Psalms of Maccabean date, and very much doubt whether such Hebrew could then have been written. The Aramaic, which was spoken in the second century B.C., has found its way into the Books of Ezra and Daniel; and the Hebrew of the Mishnah contains a large infusion of Greek and Latin words, just as Esther, at an earlier period, contains Persian terms. On the other hand, the literature which does belong to the first and second centuries B.C., especially Ecclesiasticus, contains much that equals in beauty and nobility of thought even the finest passages of Isaiah and of Job.

No mention has been made of a curious palace, built by the priest Hyrcanus in Gilead before 176 B.C.; but I have fully described it in my Memoir of the Moab Survey, and in my volume on "Heth and Moab." It is remarkable as showing the Greek influence in this remote region. Much of the ornament is classic, and the figures of lions (as described by Josephus and as still existing) were contrary to the Law. The masonry was larger than that of Herod's Temple at Jerusalem, and finished with the sunken draft to the stones, which is of Greek, not of Phœnician origin. The Aramaic text on the rock close by is in the same alphabet used on the Has-

monean coins of the age. No Greek inscriptions are known in Palestine, or in Syria, which are as early as the time of the Hasmoneans, except on coins such as those of Alexander Jannæus; but Greek pottery has of late been found by excavation, which may be even earlier. The Greek language was extensively used throughout these regions before the Christian era, and was adopted by the Romans in the East. This is why the later Jewish books, the Gospels, and the works of Josephus, were written in Greek, the *lingua franca* of Western Asia about the time of Christ. The palace of Hyrcanus is, however, the only dated building of the Hasmonean age which remains to illustrate the earlier Greek influence.

In describing the temple at Jerusalem I have relied mainly on the Mishnah; and the masonry and arrangements of the courts are those which we know to have belonged to the temple in the time of Herod. I doubt if any of the present outer walls of the Haram can be supposed older than his time; but Herod did not himself build the inner courts, or the Holy House, which were restored and enlarged by the Jewish priests. The masonry of the palace of Hyrcanus shows us that the Greek finish to the stones was already adopted in 176 B.C., so that it may very probably have marked the temple masonry in the time of Judas.

A warning is also needful with respect to the

"Book Zohar," mentioned in connection with the Kabbala. A book so named was attributed to a Jewish writer of the second century A.D.; but the work usually so called, which is the main source of Kabbalistic lore, has been shown to have been written in the thirteenth century A.D. At the same time Kabbalistic ideas are of very great antiquity. They are traceable even in cuneiform texts, and were common to Jew and Gnostic in the second century of our era. Kabbalistic scrolls of early date have been excavated; and Kabbalistic bowls from Babylon are supposed to be at least as old as the fourth century A.D. The Kabbalistic book Jetzira, or "Creation," is supposed to be of the ninth century A.D.

As regards Samaritan literature confusion is often made, even by Hebrew scholars, between the "Samaritan Chronicle" (published by Dr. Neubauer in 1869) and the Samaritan "Book of Joshua" (published by Juynboll in 1848), which also is often called "The Samaritan Chronicle." Both these works I possess and have studied. The former was begun in 1149 A.D., copied and continued by another priest two centuries later, and carried down to 1859 by later hands. It is a very sober work, and contains valuable information as to the Samaritans of the seventh century A.D. The "Book of Joshua" is a wild legendary book, the earlier part of which was written

in 1362 A.D., and the latter part in 1513 A.D. The oldest Samaritan book in existence is the early copy of the Pentateuch at Shechem, probably dating from the seventh century A.D. The Samaritans never accepted the Jewish "Book of Joshua," but the Torah only; and the Jews themselves have always divided the Torah from all their other sacred books. For this reason the theory of a "Hexateuch," making the narrative of Joshua to form part of a volume containing the Pentateuch, appears to be perhaps fanciful. No such volume can have existed at the time when the Samaritans accepted the whole Torah (perhaps about 300 B.C.), and rejected all other books of the Jews. If the reference is to earlier days, then, according to critical opinion, parts of the Pentateuch must be omitted. It is clear that there was a time when the Pentateuch existed as a whole, substantially as we now have it, and when it was a distinct literature, not including any part of the Book of Joshua. This Samaritan evidence of the history of Jewish literature seems to be ignored; but it agrees with the account of the Samaritan Pentateuch existing in 270 B.C., when the Law was translated into Greek.

Little has been said of the Septuagint in this volume. The translation of the Law was apparently all that was attempted at first, and the translations of other parts of the Scriptures appear to be of different dates

and different values. The copies used by the translators, written in the very indistinct Jewish characters of the Hasmonean age, account, by the errors between similar letters, for the origin of many mistakes made by the translators. Even the Alexandrian manuscript, which is much less corrupt than the Vatican, contains such errors; and the translators often make complete nonsense of passages which are clear in the original Hebrew. The two transcriptions of the letter *Ain*, in personal or other proper names, mark two schools of translation. It should be noted that the Septuagint sometimes agrees with the Hebrew against the Samaritan, while sometimes all three versions differ. The occurrence of whole verses, and even chapters, in the Greek version, which are not in our Hebrew text; the different arrangement of the chapters of Jeremiah, and of the Psalms; and many other well-known discrepancies, are more important, perhaps, than the instance from Genesis quoted in the text. The Hebrew text, which Jerome preferred to all others, is probably the purest text, and it contains passages omitted in the Septuagint. Nor does there seem to be any sound reason why these should be questioned, because of the deficiencies of the latter, which may be due to the translators having before them copies out of which leaves had been lost. The publication of the really ancient manuscript of the Law from Shechem—which no

scholar has yet been able to study—would be more valuable for criticism than volumes of argument, but it would probably prove to be nearer to the Hebrew than the later Samaritan Rolls. Compared with other literature, the differences between the versions of the Old Testament known to us are remarkably small and unimportant.

In studying foreign influences on the Jews I have been impressed, in reading the Zend-Avesta, with the great importance of early Persian literature to the student of the Talmud and of the writings of the Pharisees; and especially of that Messianic literature which dates from the time of John Hyrcanus to that of Herod the Great. The appearance of the ascetic sects (Essenes and Therapeutæ) in Palestine and Egypt is also, perhaps, not unconnected with the spread of Buddhism westwards. Josephus himself speaks of Indian philosophers in Syria at an early period ("Contra Apion," i. 22).

In speaking of Hillel as the author of the Mishnah, I merely intended to repeat Jewish tradition. The work as we now have it is that of Rabbi Judah, about the close of the second century A.D.; but many of the decisions, sayings, and parables go back almost to the time of Alexander the Great.

As regards the Jewish tradition of the ten tribes (see 2 Esdras xiii. 41), which is the basis of popular delusions still propagated in England, the belief was

curiously confirmed in the middle ages by the fact that Jewish kings were ruling a mixed population of Aryans, Turks, Arabs, and Jews, in the Caucasus during the ninth and tenth centuries A.D.

C. R. C.

SOUTHAMPTON,
December 20th, 1893.

PREFACE.

THE story of the life of Judas Maccabæus forms one of the most important episodes in Jewish history, if only because it explains how the nation first developed that peculiar phase of character which marked it at the time when Christianity was given to the world.

The sources of historic information upon which I have mainly relied in the following pages are the First Book of Maccabees and the Antiquities of Josephus. The Second Book of Maccabees being generally considered to be far inferior in value to the first, and its statements being sometimes in direct contradiction to the more ancient accounts, has contributed only some of the picturesque details with which it abounds.

These authorities, however, furnish little beyond the dry bones of history. Some attempt has, therefore, been made in this volume to render the story more vivid by aid of description of the scenes in which it was laid, and of the contemporary social

and religious life of the Jews. The Talmudic information is mainly derived from the well-known edition of the Mishna by Surenhusius; and the account of the country is due to the advantages I enjoyed during the survey of Palestine, when I was able to visit more than once each of the battlefields of Judas.

Finally, I have attempted to give a slight sketch of those results of the great struggle which appear most important in relation to general history, and especially as connected with the origin and growth of Christianity.

C. R. C.

GUILDFORD, 17*th May*, 1879.

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COIN OF ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES.

JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

INTRODUCTION.

FROM EZRA TO JUDAS.

JUDAS MACCABÆUS is the central figure of one of the most important periods of Jewish history—a time when the nation struggled successfully to attain independence, and during which the germs of the later Jewish religious development first appeared, and the foundation was laid of that condition of Jewish society which existed in the time of Christ.

The public career of Judas extends only over eight years, and the work he commenced was left to his brothers and their descendants to carry out; yet the name of Judas stands out more distinctly than that of any other leader of the age, and Jewish historians of later times have ever loved to magnify his doings, even at the expense of the later Hasmoneans, whose actual achievements were more important.

It cannot, however, be said that this high estimate of Judas is unjust. The later conquests may have been more extensive, and the position of the later native Jewish princes may have been more independent and politically stronger. But it was Judas who first dared to withstand the foreign tyranny which threatened to annihilate the Jewish faith, and it was the genius of Judas which first pointed out the measures, military and political, by which independence might be best preserved. The later Hasmoneans merely carried out the designs of which Judas was the original author, and he may, therefore, be justly regarded as the father of Jewish freedom.

In the following pages, I have attempted not only to narrate the bare facts of the short career of Judas, but also to give a sketch of the gradual development of the nation during the period of independence, from Ezra to the Herodian age, with some account of their habits of life, their manners, and their religious contests and tendencies, and with an estimate of the true value of the achievements of Judas, as influencing the later history of the Jews. From a study of the condition and habits of the nation, we obtain a clear view of the immediate causes of the revolt, and the real importance of the struggle will be seen to lie in the development of the national character and religion, which was the result of the freedom obtained by the efforts of Judas.

In order to understand the causes of the revolt, it is necessary, first, briefly to review the history of the nation from the time of their return from captivity.

The book of Nehemiah closes about the year 435 B.C. At this time, the nation was once more re-established in its native country, the city and the Temple had been rebuilt, and the office of the high priesthood was once more constituted.

The immediate successors of Ezra the scribe are known in Jewish history as "the men of the great synagogue," and were regarded with a veneration inferior only to that shown for the great men whose works close the historical canon of the Old Testament. But little, however, is to be gathered of the history of the nation, or of its chief men, during the century which intervened between the time of Nehemiah and that of Alexander the Great; and one short chapter only is devoted, by Josephus, to the time between the death of Eliashib, the High Priest of the time of Nehemiah, and the visit of Alexander to Jerusalem. It appears that during this century the nation remained peacefully content under the Persian rule, in enjoyment of religious freedom, and governed, to a certain extent, by native chiefs.

In the year 333 B.C., the news of the advance of Alexander the Great spread consternation in the Holy City, and the report of his cruelties to the people of Tyre overawed the Jews, and deterred them

from any ideas of resistance. Ambassadors were sent to meet the conqueror in the plain of Sharon; and as he approached Jerusalem, a long procession of priests and elders, headed by the venerable High Priest Jaddua, went out to await his arrival on the plateau of Scopus, whence the advancing army could be seen in the distance, and where Jerusalem first struck the sight of the conqueror.

The wisdom and magnanimity of Alexander were on this occasion specially evinced. He received in a friendly manner the proffered submission of the Jews, and showed the greatest deference to their religious scruples. Under the guidance of the priests, he offered sacrifices in the Temple—probably without transgressing the law which forbade strangers to enter the inner court—and he treated the High Priest with marked respect. Thus, by tact and toleration, he secured the friendship of a nation which had so often resisted the greatest monarchs of the Old World, and Palestine passed without a struggle from the rule of Persia to that of Greece.

The visit of Alexander, so long remembered by the Jews, had an influence of unexpected importance on their future history; for from the time of that visit dates the establishment of a Jewish colony in Egypt, and the foundation of a new religious sect.

From Jerusalem, Alexander marched to Egypt, and was accompanied by a considerable Jewish con-

tingent, enlisted with the understanding that they were to be permitted to adhere to their own law and customs. In return for the valuable services of this force, Alexander conceded to them equal civic rights with the Macedonians; and after he had founded Alexandria, tracing its walls with his own hands, he allotted a separate quarter in that city to the Jews.

In the year 324 B.C. Alexander the Great died—the great horn of the rough goat was broken (Daniel viii. 21), "and for it came up four notable ones towards the four winds of heaven"—ver. 8. Palestine became part of the Asiatic kingdom of the family of Seleucus reigning in Antioch, and Egypt was given to the Ptolemies.

The first Ptolemy (son of Lagus) took Jerusalem in the following year, entering it as though to offer sacrifice on the Sabbath day. He also attacked and conquered Samaria, and led as prisoners to Alexandria a great number of both Jews and Samaritans, who increased the colony already founded.

The next important episode in Jewish history occurred in 277 B.C., when, by the request of Ptolemy Philadelphus, Eleazar, the High Priest, sent the seventy elders to Egypt to translate the Pentateuch into Greek.

Under the earlier Seleucidæ, Palestine attained to a condition of prosperity, and the Jews to political consideration, far beyond that enjoyed under Persian

rule. The Asiatic successors of Alexander pursued the same system of religious toleration which he had inaugurated, and the relations between the orthodox Jews and the heathen world were more friendly than at any previous or subsequent period.

The attention of the Seleucidæ was, moreover, engaged with external affairs. Antiochus the Great was attacked by the Romans, and defeated at Magnesia, and was forced to send his son Antiochus (famous afterwards in the history of the Jewish revolt) as a hostage to Rome. In the year 176 B.C. Antiochus the Great died, and his son Seleucus, who succeeded him, was shortly afterwards murdered, leaving as rightful heir to the throne a son named Demetrius: but Demetrius was in Rome at the time, where he had been sent by his father to take the place of his uncle Antiochus Epiphanes, the younger son of Antiochus the Great. Thus the opportunity presented itself to Epiphanes of seizing the throne of the Seleucidæ, and of usurping the rights of his absent nephew—an opportunity which a man so bold and unscrupulous was not slow to seize.

Meanwhile, Palestine had been given away by Antiochus the Great, as the dower of his daughter Cleopatra, who was married to Ptolemy Epiphanes, King of Egypt. The first act of the new king, Antiochus Epiphanes, was to set aside this arrangement; and, immediately after his accession, he entered

Palestine and assumed control over its affairs, installing a new high priest at Jerusalem in the year 172 B.C.

The internal dissensions of the Jews now, unfortunately, drew attention to their affairs. They had no longer to deal with a wise and great monarch, but with a man of so violent and unscrupulous a character that he would allow no obstacle to baulk him of his will, and no considerations of justice or policy to restrain his lawless tyranny. By his enemies, Antiochus Epiphanes was named Epimanes—"the frantic"—and the title was well earned by the recklessness of his expenditure, the intolerance of his persecutions, and the folly of his projects of government.

The High Priest, Onias the Third, died in the year 176 B.C., and was succeeded by his brother Jesus, or Jason. Onias also left a son named Onias, and had a third brother named Menelaus, and these two latter became also claimants for the office of the high-priesthood.

Antiochus Epiphanes took the part of the younger brother, Menelaus. He had been sent by Jason, the rightful heir, to Antioch with a present of 600 talents, but proved unfaithful to his trust, and with a bribe of 900 talents induced the new usurper to favour his own claim. On his first visit to Jerusalem, in 172 B.C., Antiochus installed Menelaus in the office,

and Jason, though supported by the public voice, was forced to fly to the land of the Ammonites.

Antiochus, becoming engaged in a quarrel with Egypt, made four successive expeditions from Antioch against that country, in every case passing down the coast of Syria, and thus inflicting more or less misery on its inhabitants. In the year 170 B.C., during the second of these campaigns, he attacked Pelusium, took Memphis, and would probably have subdued Alexandria, but for the warning he received from the Romans, which forced him to retire under pain of their displeasure. Thus, with a treasury impoverished by reckless expenditure, and with a discontented and mutinous army, he once more reached the plains below Jerusalem.

Unfortunately for the Jews, a report had spread that Antiochus had been slain in Egypt, and Jason, assisted by a large party, had surprised Menelaus in Jerusalem, and had shut him up in the stronghold of the city. This revolution afforded to Antiochus the pretext which he was only too anxious to seize. During his former visit he had become acquainted with the wealth of the Jerusalem Temple, and from his father he had learned to consider such riches as legitimate plunder, Antiochus the Great having set the first example in his attempt to sack the Temple of Diana in Elymais.

On hearing of the return of Jason, the army of

Antiochus advanced on Jerusalem, and was admitted by the faction which supported Menelaus. Thus Jerusalem was taken without a siege, and at once delivered over to be sacked. A general massacre of the inhabitants of every age and sex ensued, the public buildings were burnt, the Temple was desecrated, great numbers of Jews were taken captive to be sold in Antioch, the golden candlestick, the altar of incense, all the sacred vessels, and even the veils and crowns of the sanctuary, were carried away. Menelaus was once more installed as High Priest, and a Phrygian governor was left to assist him. The unhappy Jason fled to Egypt, and afterwards to Sparta, where he died, and Antiochus, in the words of the Book of Daniel, returned "into his land with great riches."—Dan. xi. 28.

Such were the events immediately preceding the revolt, which broke out two years later at Modin. In order more clearly to appreciate them, a table of dates and principal events is appended to this Introduction. Having thus briefly narrated the history leading up to the first scene of our hero's life, we may now glance at the social and religious condition of the nation at his time, before we proceed to the story of his own brief but eventful career.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF EVENTS FROM EZRA TO SIMON THE HASMONEAN.

B.C.		
466	Accession of Artaxerxes Longimanus.	
460	Ezra sent to Jerusalem.	
447	Nehemiah sent to Jerusalem.	Eliashib High Priest.
435	End of the Book of Nehemiah.	
424	Accession of Darius II.	Joida II. High Priest.
405	,, Artaxerxes II.	
359	,, Ochus I.	
338	,, Arogus I.	Jonathan I. High Priest.
334	,, Darius III.	
333	Alexander visits Jerusalem.	Jaddua High Priest.
324	Death of Alexander.	Onias I. High Priest.
313	Era of the Seleucidæ.	
310		Simon I. High Priest.
305	Accession of Ptolemy I., son of Lagus.	
302	,, Antiochus I., Soter.	
285	,, Ptolemy II., Philadelphus.	Eleazar II. High Priest.
277	The Septuagint translation made.	
276		Manasseh High Priest.
263	Accession of Antiochus II., Theos.	
250	Antigonus of Soccho President of the Sanhedrim.	Onias II. High Priest.
248	Accession of Seleucus II.	
247	,, Ptolemy III., Euergetes.	
228	,, Seleucus III.	
225	,, Antiochus III., the Great.	
222	,, Ptolemy IV., Philopater.	
219	,, Ptolemy V., Epiphanes.	Simon II. High Priest.
205	Joseph farms the taxes (Ant. xii. 4).	
199	Jose ben Joasus President of Sanhedrim.	Onias III. High Priest.
181	Accession of Ptolemy VI., Philometer.	
176	,, Antiochus Epiphanes.	Jason High Priest.
172		Menelaus High Priest.
170	Antiochus takes Jerusalem.	
168	Revolt of the Jews.	
165	Restoration of the Temple.	

163	Sabbatic year. Antiochus V., Eupator, takes Jerusalem.	
162	Accession of Demetrius.	Alcimus High Priest.
161	Death of Judas Maccabæus.	
160	Joshua ben Pheraki President of the Sanhedrim.	Jonathan High Priest.
143	Simon III. Ethnarch of the Jews and High Priest.	
142	First year of Jewish independence.	

N.B.—This table is taken from that given by Mr. F. R. Conder in "Cassell's Bible Educator."

CHAPTER I.

THE NATIONAL LIFE.

"AS for ourselves, therefore, we neither inhabit a maritime country, nor do we delight in merchandise, nor in such a mixture with other men as arises from it; but the cities we dwell in are remote from the sea, and having a fruitful country for our habitation, we take pains to cultivate that only. Our principal care is this—to educate our children well, and we think it to be the most necessary business of our whole life to observe the laws that have been given us, and to keep those rules of piety that have been delivered down to us."—Josephus *contra* Apion, i. 12.

Such is the description which Josephus gives of Jewish life in his own time. He represents his fellow-countrymen as agriculturists rather than traders, and as intent chiefly on the observance of the Law of Moses. Such an account, though given as representing the national life in the Herodian age, must evidently apply still better to the less advanced

civilisation of the earlier period now under consideration; and so conservative is the Eastern character, that we find the Jews hardly advanced in the time of the Hasmoneans from the simplicity of the social system in the first days of the consolidation of the nation under Samuel; while, on the other hand, we find in the peasant life of modern Palestine an almost exact reproduction of that of the lower classes at the period under consideration.

One of the most remarkable peculiarities of the social system of the Jews seems to have been the entire absence of the middle class—that important estate which grows gradually with the advance of civilisation and with the development of trade. The nation seems to have been divided in the second century before Christ into two classes—the educated and the ignorant—the priests and townsmen of higher rank belonging to the one, the villagers and agricultural population to the other.

The division is almost as marked at the present day as it was then, and the upper class speak of the Fellâh, or "tiller," with a contempt which reminds one of the Jewish scorn of the "untaught" and "beasts of the people."

The upper class consisted of that "holy seed" which was able to trace back its genealogy to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and it included the families of the twenty-four

orders of priests. The lower class of the *Hidiut*, or "ignorant," consisted probably in great measure of the descendants of the aboriginal Canaanite population, mixed with the Philistine, Cuthean, or Phœnician elements in the southern, central, and northern districts of the land respectively.

In sketching the national life, we have thus to consider separately that of these two distinct classes, which, though living together and forming one nation, were yet distinguished by their language and their religion not less than by their occupations and social position.

The language of the mass of the people was no longer Hebrew, but Aramaic, and the classic tongue in which the Law and the Prophets were written was unintelligible to the lower class. As early as the time of Ezra a translation of the holy books was required, as we find recorded in the famous passage where it is related that "they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."—Neh. viii. 8. To this system of interpretation the origin of all the later Targums is traced, for they were at first paraphrases in Aramaic, which gradually became formulated, and which finally were committed to writing after the Christian era.

Popular sayings and proverbs are said to have been preserved in Aramaic from an even earlier period

than the Hasmonean times, and this dialect remains even now, with but slight modification, the language of the Fellahîn in Palestine.

The language of the educated was the "tongue of the Holy House," the original Hebrew of the times before the captivity. It stood to Aramaic somewhat in the relationship of Latin to Italian, and became the sacred literary language in which the earlier comments on the Law were written.

The character generally employed in writing at this period appears to have been the ancient Libonai, resembling the Phœnician: the square character was however also employed, exclusively for sacred writing. Coins struck after the revolt still exist, with inscriptions in the earlier forms approaching the Phœnician, Moabite, and Samaritan letters. The Jews assert that the square letters were introduced by Ezra, and state that the classic language and the square letters were used by the learned, but the old letters and the Chaldean or Aramaic tongue by the ignorant; "and who are the ignorant?" the writer continues—"they are the Cuthim." If the Jewish assertion be correct, the square alphabet must at this early period have been considered sacred, and was not used for any secular purpose such as that of the stamp on coins.

An inquiry into the life of the educated class of Jews in the second century before Christ should

include some account of the system of government and of education, the condition of the sciences and arts, of manufactures and commerce. A few words may first be said on these questions before describing the customs of the larger class of the *Hidiut*, or "ignorant"—the mass of the people who were engaged purely in agricultural and pastoral occupations.

The central idea of Jewish government, religious or civil, and of Jewish education, moral or intellectual, was the fulfilment of the Law. Education meant knowledge of the Law; Government, the enforcing of the Law; Policy, the application of the Law to relations with the heathen. The commands of Moses formed the standard by which the value of everything was to be measured, and the rule by which all action was to be guided.

The Jews under Antiochus were probably worse governed than even the Syrians of the present day under the Turks; for whilst the Koran is the standard, religious and civil, both of the Turk and of the Moslem Syrian, the Law of Moses was not recognised as a legal system by the myrmidons of the Seleucidæ. In one respect, however, the Governors sent by Antiochus no doubt resembled the Pachas of the nineteenth century, the main idea of both being the extortion of money on any convenient pretext, partly by way of tax or tribute, partly on the Governor's own private account.

The native method of government seems also closely to have resembled that now existing in Palestine, being the development of a system of councils formed of the elders and more distinguished local chiefs.

The principal Council sat in Jerusalem, and consisted of seventy-one members. It was called the Beth Din, or "house of debate," and the president was entitled Nasi, while the vice-president was called father of the Beth Din. This Sanhedrim held its meetings in the stone chamber at one corner of the main Temple Court. Men of every class, high or low, rich or poor, priest or lay, were eligible, if qualified by a reputation for sagacity and for knowledge of the Law. Criminal and civil cases were tried (when permission was accorded by the Greek Governor) before the Beth Din, and the 613 precepts which summed up the whole duty of the devout Jew—365 prohibitory and 248 obligatory—were enforced by this national tribunal.

Smaller councils, modelled on the same plan, but consisting of twenty-four members only, sat in the country towns. These seem to have resembled the modern *Mejâlis,* or town councils, which exist in the principal places in Palestine at the present day, and which assist by their deliberations the Turkish Governor and the religious judge, or Kadi.

The education of the young was, Josephus tells us,

the first care of the Jews, and the same sentiment is echoed throughout Jewish literature. But by education was understood simply the teaching of the Law of Moses, for little else was known by the teachers.

Thus, as at the present day the Moslem child is taught to read only the Korân, while a knowledge of the elements of arithmetic is considered as equivalent to a very advanced education in Europe; so in the year 170 B.C. a Jewish child in Palestine learned to read the Holy Books at eight years old, and in the later Jewish period to study the Mishna at ten. This education was confined, however, evidently to the upper class, and could only be obtained in places where schools and teachers existed. The children of the *Hidiut*, in the far-off villages, must have grown up in ignorance, being probably employed in tending flocks and herds, as peasant boys still are in Palestine, and, like the Fellâh boys, they cannot have known how to write or read.

The schooling was directly connected with the religious service of the people. Synagogues date back apparently to the time of Ezra, and were useful for the diffusion of religious knowledge. Of the number of synagogues we cannot gain any idea, but they existed even in Jerusalem, close by the Temple. The service of the synagogue was founded on that of the Temple, and our English liturgy owes much to it.

The *Shema*, or exhortation, was followed by prayers

and psalms; two lessons were read daily—the first from the Law, the second from the Prophets—and a *Deresh*, or exposition, followed. The Hebrew was explained by the reader, and the explanation was gradually formulated, and at length written down and became a Targum. The synagogue had an appointed minister and elders, also ten or more *Batlanim*, or rich "men of leisure," whose duty it was to form a quorum of the congregation at every service. Each synagogue had also its *Chazzan*, or clerk, who was generally the village schoolmaster as well. There were three services daily, and solemn days on the 2nd, 5th, and 7th days of the week. The synagogue was built so that the congregation should stand facing Jerusalem, the pulpit of the minister being in the middle. The elders held the power of excommunication, or "putting out of the synagogue"—a power still exercised by the Jerusalem Rabbis.

Science formed no part of the orthodox education. The study of Greek, or of any foreign tongue, was discouraged by these teachers, who dreaded the pernicious influence of heathen philosophy. "It is written," one Rabbi said of the Law, "'thou shalt meditate therein day and night.' Find me an hour which is neither day nor night, and in that you may study Greek."

A people who had no calendar, but watched the new moon rise, and signalled its appearance at

Jerusalem by lines of beacon fires, who occasionally made errors even in this observation, and were at the mercy of Samaritan mock-beacons, cannot be said to have advanced far in astronomy. The mysteries of astrology were perhaps not unknown to the Jewish sect of the Mehistanites; but in Ecclesiasticus, a book not much earlier than the period now under consideration, we find the suggestive exclamation, "Who can measure the breadth of the earth?"—i. 3.

Nor was the attention of the educated turned to art. The work of the painter or sculptor is, and always has been, regarded by Semitic nations with horror, as an attempt on man's part to imitate the Almighty in creation; and the Jewish hatred of graven images was, no doubt, partly due to the licentiousness of the idolatrous worship among surrounding nations. "Neither did the mischievous invention of men deceive us, nor an image spotted with divers colours, the painter's fruitless labour; the sight whereof enticeth fools to lust after it, and so they desire the form of a dead image that hath no breath." —Wisdom xv. 4, 5. Such are the characteristic words of a writer of the period, and such was the stern and puritanic spirit in which the Jew spoke of the æsthetic worship of the Greek.

Music even had made no progress, and the instruments used in the Temple service were few and rude. The modern Syrian music is most distasteful to

Europeans, and its only excellence consists in the wonderfully good time kept by the performers. The viol with two strings and a bow, the lyre struck with a plectrum, the silver trumpet, the double pipe, the *shofar*, or ram's-horn, and the cymbal, were used in the Temple, but they were only employed as occasional accompaniments to the voices. The cow-horn, Pan's-pipe, Eolian harp, and "tabor," or small hand-drum, were also known, and from this category we can judge how poor the music must have been.

Poetry alone was unhampered by national prejudice; and the tone of religious thought, delighting in bold anthropomorphic descriptions of the actions of the Deity, the language of an age of primitive civilisation, gave free scope for poetic works, rivalling even the sacred Psalms of David. Few passages in the Old Testament are superior to the magnificent description in the Wisdom of Sirach of the works of God—"Look upon the rainbow, and praise Him that made it; very beautiful it is in the brightness thereof. It compasseth the heaven about in a glorious circle, and the hands of the Most High have bended it."—Ecclus. xliii. 11, 12.

Such then was the condition of the upper class. A people with its eyes turned back to the past, intent only on the observance of the Law of Moses, waiting calmly for the expected Prophet, reading their sacred books, as the Roman Church still does, in a tongue

unknown to the multitude, but, unlike the Church of Rome, accompanying the reading with some attempt at translation, however unfaithful the rendering may have been to the original spirit of the Scripture.

It is impossible to lay too much stress on the fact that religious observances formed the essence of the Jewish life, at least as far as the upper class was concerned. Every earthly consideration was made subservient to that of following the commandments of the Law, and not only inconvenience, but even danger and death were cheerfully suffered rather than infringe the observance of the Sabbath, or of the Sabbatic year.

Twice every year every male Jew was commanded to visit Jerusalem, and the organisation by which this duty was carried out formed a fundamental part of the individual and national life.

The priests were divided into twenty-four orders, the names of which are given in the Bible, and the division was as old as the time of David.—1 Chron. xxiv. These orders relieved one another every week in the Temple service, the new order reaching the city on Friday, and the old leaving on the first day of the week. Thus a double company was always present in the Temple on the Sabbath, and every order visited the Holy City twice in twelve lunar months.

Not only was this division into *Mishmaroth*, or orders, organised for the sons of Aaron, but the whole

nation was divided in a corresponding manner, and a certain proportion of the laity visited the Temple with each company of priests. Thus, whatever the occupation of the layman, and wherever his home might be, he was bound twice a-year to go up with the priests of his district to Jerusalem, and to remain there a week. No organisation could be better fitted to preserve the purity of the national faith, and nothing can better show how vital an element religion must have formed of the national life than the fact that it was found possible to enforce so strict a rule upon the laity as well as upon the priesthood. The position of the "standing men," or representatives of the congregation—who, as being specially purified, were admitted to an inner part of the Temple—was held in the highest esteem. These representatives stood in the raised cloister which ran north and south in front of the Altar Court, ten feet above the level of the great square enclosure where the main part of the congregation gathered, with the women in galleries round the open court. Fifteen steps led from the Court of the Women to the great gate Nicanor, and to the cloister of the "standing men." On the fifteen steps the Levites chanted the Songs of Degrees (Ps. cxx.–cxxxiv.), and the priests stood up on the dwarf wall which rose between the people and the altar, close above the cloister of the "standing men," and thence blessed the congregation. An impassable barrier

fenced off the worshippers from the priests in the Altar Court, and to this barrier the selected and honoured representatives called "standing men" were allowed to approach the nearest.

The great religious festivals of the year also became occasions of social intercourse between the inhabitants of remote districts, and thus united the nation.

The Jews had, properly speaking, no calendar. The feasts of trumpets, which celebrated each new moon, were regulated by actual observation of the Crescent. Throughout Palestine, the appearance of the slender sickle, which shines so brightly in the clear Oriental heaven, was watched with eager eyes, and those who first saw it hastened to report it to the Beth Din in Jerusalem. Even the law of the Sabbath-day's journey was abrogated to allow these messengers to proceed at once to the capital; and it is said that, on one occasion, forty pairs of witnesses passed through Lydda alone on the Sabbath, intent on the errand which seemed so important to this primitive people.

The witnesses were obliged to be men of good character, and were very closely questioned by the Sanhedrim. If they had only seen a reflexion in water, or a doubtful portion of the luminary through clouds, or if they had seen the new moon through glass, their evidence was disallowed, and their journey was fruitless. Here, probably, we trace the origin of the superstition that it is unlucky to see the new moon

first through glass. Certainly it was unlucky for the witness who had made a laborious journey in vain.

The evidence was taken until the time of evening prayer on the last day of the old month. When it had been clearly proved that the new moon was visible, a beacon was lighted on Olivet, and when this was seen, other beacon-fires spread through Palestine until the land was in a blaze from north to south. If, however, by reason of storms or other natural causes, the moon was not seen, the month was only lengthened by one day, and the new month began on the second.

The Jewish year commenced at the vernal equinox, and the Passover occurred early in April. In the end of May the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) was celebrated, and in the beginning of October the booths of the Feast of Tabernacles were built. To these three ancient festivals a fourth was added in later times, and the Feast of Purim, at which wine was drunk in inordinate quantities, was celebrated in the beginning of March, and commemorated the national deliverance by Esther. At the Feast of Tabernacles, and at that of Purim, palms were borne by the worshippers, and afterwards laid up on the roof of the Temple cloisters. On the first of these anniversaries the Temple was illuminated.

Six fasts were also yearly observed, including the

great Day of Atonement. The first occurred in the beginning of July, in memory of five national calamities; the second fast, in the end of the same month, was on account of the destruction of Solomon's Temple; the third was the great Day of Atonement, in the end of October; the fourth, lasting three days, commemorated the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, in December; the last was the Fast of Esther, preceding Purim. Later festivals, instituted in the times of which we are now treating, will be noticed in due course.

We find in the Talmud the most minute details of the observances during these festivals; but, among all the religious ceremonies, those of the solemn Day of Atonement are most fully explained, a whole treatise being devoted to the details of the service as observed in the later times.

On that day the goat consecrated to Azazel was led forth to the wilderness, bearing the sins of the people on its head. A remarkable modification in the Law, or rather perhaps a strained reading of its directions, was introduced latterly into the service. The unhappy goat was indeed loosed when it reached the dreary desert cliffs above Jericho; but the messenger who led it pushed the animal over the edge of a steep slope, and it rolled down about 1000 feet, and was killed by the fall. The scene of this unique custom is to be found on the great hill, with steeply

sloping sides, where the old name of Tzook, applied in the Talmud to the mountain in question, still lingers, at the exact distance from Jerusalem mentioned in the tract Yomah.

There is no evidence that the Jews were engaged in commerce at this period. Josephus states that, even in his own day, they were not addicted to trade; and in the Books of Maccabees husbandry is mentioned, but trade is not. The Holy Land had no harbours, and its primitive cultivation did not leave much produce to export. What was required of woven or spun materials the Jews made for themselves, and there were potters, dyers, and tanners in the country just as there are now. Of metallurgy probably something was known, for smiths' work was necessary for the forging of ploughshares and mattocks. Foreign merchants seem also to have visited the country; but commerce and manufacture are probably at the present day much what they were in the Hasmonean times, and the Jewish dislike to mix with the heathen must have been fatal to any extensive interchange of produce.

Turning next to the lower class of the *Hidiut*, or "ignorant," we find them leading an agricultural and pastoral life.

Their language, as before said, was the Aramaic or Chaldee dialect, and Hebrew was not understood. It follows that, in the more remote villages, where there

were no schools or synagogues, and where the population consisted of peasants unable to write or read, there can have been but little knowledge of the Law of Moses. At a later period we find mention of the common people, who were "ignorant of the Law," and in the Talmud various writers look forward to a millennium, when every soul in Palestine should be acquainted with its precepts; from which we may perhaps fairly infer that such universal knowledge had never existed, even in the palmiest days of Jewish independence.

There are indications in Jewish literature which tend to show that the old worship of the "high places," which the children of Israel were commanded to destroy, was never entirely stamped out. Some of these idolatrous shrines existed, and were held sacred, even in the 4th century of the Christian era. In the Mishna, this worship is considered a subject of sufficient importance to demand a tract to itself, and instances of trees in Palestine, locally held sacred, but officially condemned by the Rabbis, are given in the treatise on "Foreign Worship."

Nor is this worship of local divinities extinct even at the present day. The modern Mukâm replaces the ancient Makom, or "place," consecrated to some traditional prophet or chief to whom supernatural powers are ascribed. Sacred trees still exist all over the country, and sacrifices and processions entirely

disconnected with the ritual of the Moslem religion are locally observed.

Distinguished alike by religion and language, the rustic population led a life of toil and misery, oppressed by the foreign rulers, neglected and despised by the upper class of their nation. They were born, they married, and they died—such was their story, generation after generation. Their religion, as far as they could understand it, was adverse to progress, and commanded them absolutely to abhor innovation. The children were sent to feed the flocks and herds as soon as they were of sufficient age, and thus they had no opportunity for acquiring even the rudiments of education. Thus in the peasant of Hasmonean times we find no advance on the same class in the days of Samuel, while the modern Fellâh probably presents a living picture of the aboriginal "hewers of wood" and "drawers of water" even as far back as the time of Joshua.

Of the family and social life of the second century before Christ we can only gain an idea from the scattered notices in the literature of the period.

A Jew, like a Moslem, was allowed four wives. This custom was based, like every other Jewish custom, on a venerable precedent. Jacob had four wives; therefore, it followed that the number must have been divinely permitted. In the same way, the Samaritans now allow two wives if one be childless,

acting on the same precedent, but ignoring the claims of the two inferior wives of the Patriarch. But though a rich townsman may occasionally have had the full number, the poor peasant, as a rule, cannot often have afforded to support more than one, or at the most two. So, at the present day, the number is regulated not so much by law as by the poverty of the Fellahîn.

The position of the wife cannot easily be estimated. The modern Jewish women are held in very low estimation, and live in constant terror of divorce. In the Talmud, the most cynical and contemptuous estimate of the moral and intellectual nature of women is observable, and was no doubt, to a certain extent, justified by the actual condition of Jewish female education.

On the other hand, the Bible and the early writings of post-Biblical date are full of the praise of good women as contrasted with bad ones. Famous women appear throughout the whole range of Jewish history, from Miriam to Judith. The authority of the mother over her children is again and again enforced in the writings of Solomon, and in the later imitations of his works. "A silent and loving woman," says the son of Sirach, "is a gift from the Lord, and her continent mind cannot be valued."

Marriage, in the eyes of the Jew, was a religious duty inculcated in the very commencement of the

Torah, and in later times the bride had the additional reason for desiring children that any one of her sons might prove to be the Messiah. The men were married at the early age of eighteen, the girls at twelve, which is still the age at which Jewish girls are wedded. There were three kinds of nuptials recognised by the law, and a regular betrothal preceded marriage. The girl's consent was asked after the arrangements for the alliance had been made between the bridegroom and the bride's father, and this also on Patriarchal precedent, for Rebecca was asked by Bethuel, "Wilt thou go with this man?" The bride was accompanied by her companions in procession, with songs and dances, and a dowry was paid by the husband—customs still universally observed in the East.

The ceremonies of the naming and circumcision of children were also probably much the same as those observed from the earliest period. Of these we have no special notice in the Hasmonean times; but Jewish custom is known to have forbidden feasting on the occasion of the birth of a child.

No special ceremonial appears to have existed with regard to burials. The nearest relatives accompanied the corpse, and the women uttered the shrill cries still heard at funerals. It seems probable that professional mourners were employed (Jeremiah ix. 17), and all who met a funeral were expected to

join in the procession. Purification was necessary after the ceremony, and the visiting of the grave was probably never a Jewish custom, being contrary to the whole spirit of their views as to contamination by a dead body. Costly monuments were never erected; the rolling door of the rude rock-cut tomb closed on the dead, who entered the "House of Eternity," and no certain hope of immortality consoled the mourners. "The covenant of the grave," says the son of Sirach, "is not showed thee." —Ecclus. xiv. 12.

The appearance of the country in the old days was probably, on the whole, very like that which it still presents. There is no evidence that any part of Palestine was ever, within the historic period, covered with those forests which many writers suppose to have formerly existed, or that the rainfall or supply of water in running streams has decreased. The springs and rivers noticed in Scripture still flow with water, and the deserts of Scripture are still deserts. The wild growth of copse and oak-wood now existing answers to the Hebrew nomenclature of the old natural vegetation, and the long rolling limestone ridges, the sharp precipices, the open plains and downs, present to our eyes the same features as of old.

Only in one respect is there a marked change—in the decay of cultivation throughout the land. This is an indisputable fact. In the middle of thick copses,

the traveller still comes across the old rude-stone towers of the ancient orchards. On the bare hill-sides he finds magnificent wine-presses cut in the rock, and in the districts where the white chalk prevails, the hills are contoured with endless terraces excavated on their slopes, and now only growing thorns and thistles. The present population of the whole of Syria is less than that of London, and the land is desolate because of the steady decrease of the native inhabitants.

The appearance of the country, when thoroughly cultivated, must have been one of unusual fertility and prosperity, though not of romantic beauty. The rugged hills of Hebron were indeed clothed with the thick copsewood of Hareth ; Carmel was then, as now, covered with bushes ; and the lower hills of Galilee, with the plain of Sharon, were beautified by thick oak-woods, surrounding the bright shallow streams which still run over the rocky beds of the valleys. On the other hand, bare and waterless deserts stretched along the east of the watershed ; the ghastly Jeshimon, or "solitude," reached to the crags which bound the Dead Sea on the west ; the Wilderness of Beth-Aven was stony and barren then as now ; and the open plains of Beersheba grew only grass and flowers, serving in spring as rich pasturage for the nomadic tribes. The Jordan valley was also uncultivated, and the swamps of the river afforded cover to outlaws

and fugitives; for the palm cultivation, which was first commenced by Herod the Great, had not yet been attempted, and the great capabilities of the Jericho soil were unknown.

In such districts the country had very much the same appearance in the second century before Christ that it now presents; but in those parts where cultivation was possible, the aspect of the scenery was probably more pleasing. Throughout the district of the Shephelah, or low hills, the yellow corn crowned the flat summits, and covered the red soil of the valleys. On the higher hills, the long apple-green vineyards spread terrace above terrace, as they still do in the fastnesses of Hermon. The dark soft foliage of the great olive groves in the broader valleys contrasted with the sparse, straggling leaves of the fig-trees which flourished on the higher ground. Water for irrigation was stored in cisterns long since broken, and it is by no means necessary to suppose that the natural supply was then more plentiful than it now is.

How far this condition of prosperity had been developed in the Hasmonean times, it is not easy to determine; probably the cultivation differed almost from year to year, according to the tranquillity of the land, just as it does at the present day; and no doubt, during the period of the revolt, agriculture must have suffered where the contest was being carried on.

The picture, as a whole, may, however, be taken to represent Jewish Palestine almost from the time of Samuel to that of Herod.

There is a second question which deserves notice, as rendering more vivid our appreciation of the appearance of ancient Palestine, namely, that of the original Jewish architecture. The enthusiasts who have expected to unearth by deep excavations former monuments of Jewish splendour, have always been, and will always be, doomed to disappointment. There is no good reason to suppose that the Jews were ever a race of great builders. From their literature we obtain quite a different impression, and the known antiquities of the land serve to strengthen the impression.

In the Bible we find no buildings thought worthy of special notice, except the successive Temples in Jerusalem. These latter were remarkable more for their huge proportions than for their architectural beauty. The Holy House itself was at best a very heavy-looking building; the great altar was merely a structure of unshaped stones imbedded in mortar, and whitewashed. And, in addition to this, even the original Temple was not the work of Jews, but of foreign masons hired by Solomon.

That the Jews were skilful in rock excavation there is much to indicate. The cisterns hewn in the rock, the artificially-scarped walls of rock on which the

older towns stood, the rock-cut tombs and passages, steps and platforms, which are found at the ancient sites, are plainly attributable to Jewish times. But beyond these rude and primitive works, which are remarkable for the roughness of their finish and the irregularity of their angles, we find little that can be confidently ascribed to the early periods before the Christian era.

The Canaanite towns, which Joshua in a single day reduced to a heap of ruins, cannot have been extensive or very firmly built. The city which Joab would have drawn with cords into the river, the house supported on two pillars which Samson pulled down, the cottage roof torn up to give room for the paralytic man's bed to be lowered—these various episodes suggest that the architecture of ancient Palestine was not far different from that of the modern Syrians. In the Bible, we find the towns divided into fenced cities and open villages; the former had walls of stone, the latter had none. So, in Galilee, fenced cities surrounded by walls are still found, which were fortified by the great native families, while in positions of less strategical value the villages are open and undefended. Tacitus also remarks that "a great part of Judea is composed of scattered villages."

We are then apparently justified in concluding that the architecture of the Hasmonean age was not in advance of the modern native architecture. Explorers

have failed to find any remains which show the Jews to have been at any time a nation of builders, and the land is now so well known, that it seems highly improbable that any remains of indisputable antiquity will be found beyond the primitive rock excavations, cisterns, scarps, caves, and tombs.

From the Jewish writings we may also gather a fairly vivid picture of the usual occupations of the peasantry in Jewish times.

In an ordinary year, rain was to be expected at the autumnal equinox, and it continued until the vernal equinox, the great storms of these two seasons being known as the "former" and "latter" rain. The ground was ploughed just before the rainy season, and the sowing began in October. The barley was green and high in April, and the wheat was ripe in May, in the plains. The fruit season began about September. Millet, cummin, lentiles, vetches, melons, and cucumbers were also cultivated where water and good soil existed. Such was the natural produce in the Hasmonean times, and such it still is in the present day.

The land was cleared of stones and thorns, was ploughed, though not deeply, and cross-ploughed, and was also allowed to lie fallow; but the rotation of crops was either unknown or considered contrary to the spirit of the Law, which forbade mixing various seeds.

In May and June the harvest began. The corn was cut and stacked in round cocks, much like hay in England. The carts conveyed it to the village threshing-floors; and the "corner of the field" and gleanings were left for the poor. The barley was ready a fortnight before the wheat, and there was a considerable difference in the harvest-time in the mountains and in the plains.

Brought to the Goran, or threshing-floor (now called *Jurn*), the corn was trampled by oxen, and the rude sledge, called Moreg (now *Mûrej*), was dragged over it by horses or other beasts. The grain was heaped up in the centre of the open rock platform which formed the threshing-floor; it was winnowed by tossing with shovels and forks, such as are still in use, and it was finally shaken in a sieve.

Two other principal crops were cultivated then as now—the olive, which spread in long shady groves over the western slopes; the vine, whose grapes were most luscious when filled by the autumn mists in the mountains, where the frost invigorated the plants in winter.

Such were the agricultural pursuits of the peasantry, and in addition to these they had the care of their flocks and herds. From the earliest period we find both pastoral and agricultural districts in Palestine, and find them just where they still remain. The mountains of Judea and Samaria, and the higher

ranges of Upper Galilee, with the low hills to the west, are now the agricultural parts of the country. The plain of Sharon, the desert of Beersheba, and the lower slopes of the hills above the Judean desert, together with the Jordan valley, are the pastoral districts. They are inhabited by nomadic tribes, descendants of the ancient Arabs and Midianites of the earlier period; but the peasantry on the borderland are also owners of large flocks and herds, which find pasturage at the edge of the pastoral districts; and throughout Palestine every village owns some cows and goats, and finds places where they can be fed.

This sort of mixture of agriculture and pastoral life can be traced even as early as the times of the Patriarchs: being themselves nomads and owners of cattle, they fixed their abode in the plains of Beersheba and Gerar, where the open, untilled land afforded rich food for their beasts. But the children of Heth and the sons of Hamor were owners of fields and orchards in Hebron and Shechem, which were secured by legal rights. The peasant boys of David's time sheltered their flocks in the great caves, which are still used as sheepfolds, along the skirts of the Judean desert; and Nabal the Carmelite was at once a householder and an owner of cattle in a district where the settled population is still remarkable for the number of its flocks and herds.

The character of the peasantry seems also to have borne a strong resemblance to that of the modern Fellahîn. Untaught and uncared for, tortured with fever and eye-sore, with paralysis and leprosy, unable to read or write, and grossly superstitious, they were yet remarkable for that dignified courtesy which is distinctive of Eastern peoples; and though the exclusive feeling which confined their ideas of the duties of hospitality to their "neighbours" (by which term they understood those of their own race and kin to be intended) made them appear brutal in the eyes of strangers, still among themselves there was no doubt a strong feeling of clanship and of mutual helpfulness. The morality and truthfulness of the lower class was not, however, it would appear, more remarkable of old than it is now. "A lie is a foul blot in a man," says the son of Sirach; "yet is it continually in the mouth of the untaught."—Ecclus. xx. 24.

With regard to the dress and arms of the period, we have, at best, little information; yet the conservatism of the Semitic people in all such matters, together with the primitive character of the native dress in the Palestine of to-day, leads to the supposition that the ancient costumes were much like the modern. Of this conservatism we have a curious instance in the history of the growth of Hellenism in Jerusalem, where it is recorded of the High Priest that he "brought the chief young men under his

subjection, and made them wear a hat. Now such was the height of Greek fashions and increase of heathenish manners through the exceeding profaneness of Jason, that ungodly wretch and no high priest."—2 Macc. iv. 12.

The simple dress of the country-people consisted of the shirt, the camel's-hair cloak, the broad leather belt, shoes with latchets, and in winter the warm sheepskin jacket. On their heads they probably wore some kind of turban or head-shawl, and the women still continued to favour the henna-painting and tattooing of Jezebel, and the "round tires like the moon" against which Isaiah had inveighed (Isaiah iii. 18), and which, with other primitive articles of dress, are still worn in Palestine.

The dress of the higher class is also probably unchanged, the articles enumerated as parts of the priest's costume in the book of Exodus being essentially the same as that now worn by the sacred Sheikhs and Sokhtas in Jerusalem—the coat of linen, the bonnet and breeches of the same, and the variegated waist-shawl of needlework.—Exod. xxxix. 29.

The arms and armour of the period also deserve a word of notice; and here again the change is slight, except in as far as the introduction of gunpowder among the Arabs has modified the use of defensive armour. The spear and javelin, which have now been superseded by the flint-lock gun, were used by foot-

men, and a sword, which, like that now in use, resembled rather a *Khanjar*, or large knife, than an European sword. Bucklers were also worn, and the bow and stone-bow were employed. Even as late as the 14th century the bow and buckler were in use, as described by travellers, among the Syrian Arabs, or Saracens.

The defensive armour consisted of the mail-coat (Sirion) which is still worn east of Jordan, and of the Kubah, or "cup," a steel cap, probably with a nose-piece and spike as at present. Judas himself is spoken of as wearing a breastplate, but in a manner which seems to show that such heavy armour was rarely employed.—1 Macc. iii. 3.

The Jews were not a nation of horsemen. Their tactics were those of light irregular infantry. Their principal victories were won in places where the nature of the ground neutralised the enemy's superiority in cavalry. Still the *Rumh*, or lance, is mentioned in the Bible, and if it resembled the weapon now known by the same name—a cane-lance, ten to fifteen feet long, with a knife-like steel head—it was entirely unfitted for the use of unmounted men, as indeed was the mail-shirt, which is now worn only by horsemen.

CHAPTER II.

THE NATIONAL RELIGION.

IN the preceding chapter we have considered the nation mainly from a social point of view. It has, however, been pointed out that religious duties formed the main employment of Jewish life among the higher class, and that every other consideration was sacrificed by the pious to the strict and minute observance of the various ordinances of the Law.

It is now necessary to obtain a clear idea of the state of religious parties at the time of the revolt; for it will be found that one of the main causes of the outbreak was a reaction from the latitudinarian tendencies of the party headed by the High Priests Jason and Menelaus.

In considering these questions, it is of the utmost importance to remember that the Semitic race naturally regards every religious question from a point of view entirely different from Aryan ideas. The fundamental bases of their faith are different from those which lie at the root of all the Aryan

natural religions, and the adoption of heathen fancies grafted on to Hebrew theology resulted in an unnatural doctrine which never took root among the people of Palestine.

Hence it appears to have arisen that, throughout Jewish history, any attempt to bring about a fusion with the Aryan dominant race has resulted in a reaction which has left the Jews more proudly isolated and more narrowly prejudiced than before. It was so in the time of Ezra, in the Hasmonean period, and even in the later Roman times.

The Jews who returned from Babylon were not indeed like their fathers who went into captivity. They had even lost their ancient language; they had been influenced by the religion of their Semitic conquerors; and they had imbibed many foreign views; some noble and refined, which recommended themselves naturally to a nation having a spiritual monotheistic religion of its own; some fanciful and grotesque, which mingled strangely with the dignified solemnity of their original creed.

The natural disposition of the Semitic character is remarkable for its child-like submissiveness and simplicity. The same narrowness of view, the same reverence for the "tradition of the elders," the same belief in the superiority of personal customs and inherited habits as contrasted with all that is new and strange, may be observed in the Semitic people,

viewed from a religious standpoint, and in the child who has not as yet begun to think for itself. The Semitic people do not seem to attain to that intellectual hardihood which is necessary for original thought and progress. They conceive nothing better or nobler than that which has always been known to them, and so continue to walk according to the commands handed down to them by their fathers from of old, and are anxious only to assure themselves that they have understood those commands aright.

This child-like and reverential attitude constitutes the basis of the Jewish religion, and to the same unenquiring disposition of mind, characteristic of the Semitic races, the tendency to a belief in the marvellous, which is so strong among them, is no doubt due. The conceit which arises from isolation, and from ignorance of the progress made by others, has also exerted a marked influence on the history of the Jewish faith. In the time of Moses the superiority of the nation to the surrounding tribes was no doubt very remarkable; but the Jew continued to regard his nation as a chosen race long after it had fallen far behind others in civilisation, and to maintain stoutly that any ordinance not in accord with the Law of Moses, or which in any way tended to modify that Law by adapting it to the manners of the heathen, was not merely mistaken, but positively wicked.

Another point of striking contrast between the Eastern and Western minds is the want of æsthetic perception which characterises the former. The worship of nature was foreign to the Jewish temperament. The passionate appreciation of the poetry which surrounded him by land and by sea, in hill and valley, formed the key-note of the Greek's religion and the basis of his mythology. But the Jew lived in a less beautiful land: careful cultivation was necessary before it would yield enough to support life; the rock must be quarried to make stores for water; the scanty soil of the hill-side must be carefully terraced; and thus his daily life, passed in toil in a country devoid of romantic scenery and under a burning sun, was less enjoyable than that of the Greek. He saw in nature the works of God—"very good," but only intended for his use and profit. Soulless in themselves, they were destined to be burnt up in "fervent heat" when no longer required. The Greek saw in everything a portion of the great Divine soul of the universe, and appreciated easily the truth of the immortality of that soul. The Jew looked only to the one personal Creator and Master of the whole, and to the duties of the present world; "for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

Such being the Semitic character, we find that the influence of outer nations has never been permanent,

or generally diffused. In the case of the revival under Ezra, the personal character of the leaders seems to have been eminently conservative. And it is at this period that we first meet that cry for "separation" which ultimately formed the strong ruling party of the Pharisees.

The Jews returned from captivity to find their land occupied by a mixed Semitic people. There were the ancient Canaanite inhabitants, never quite exterminated, but living as serfs and tillers of the ground; there were the foreign colonists from Cutha, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, introduced by the Assyrians, and with whom the returning Israelites had mixed; and there were the half-caste Jews, children of those who had taken Canaanite, Egyptian, or Phœnician wives.

It would appear that the ruling party of the High Priest was not adverse to this fusion of the various Semitic tribes. He was himself allied to Sanballat, the Samaritan leader, and it is doubtful whether the latter was not of foreign extraction. It was the party headed by Ezra and Nehemiah which first advocated the separation of the "holy seed" from those of mixed descent, and which condemned alike, under one sweeping ban, as strangers and uncircumcised, the heathen, the Samaritan, and the half-caste Jew.

The party of the separatists was at first small; the rulers and the majority of the nation—less zealous for

their religion—were content to take things as they were. It was not until a later period that the gradual growth of the Puritanical spirit increased the numbers of the Pharisees, until they became more powerful than the original ruling party. In the time of Simon the Just the name Sadducee began first to be applied to those who were content with the old orthodoxy; it was derived from a certain leader of the party, who was named Sadoc, and was not a descriptive term like the word Pharisee or "separatist."

The Sadducean party adhered to the original spirit of the Law, which they regarded as a practical rule of life, referring solely to the affairs of this world, with which alone man was concerned. In common with the Samaritans, the Sadducees failed to find in the Law any reference to future life, and they gave but little thought to the matter. The soul might be immortal, or it might not; but as Moses had not directed their attention specially to the matter, it could not, they argued, be a question which it was important for mankind to decide.

No doubt, the more ignorant went further, and denied the Resurrection altogether—an accusation which the Pharisees brought against the whole of their opponents—but the Karaites, the oldest of the Jewish sects, confined their teaching to the view that the promised good and evil of the Law were to be understood as referring to things temporal.

The opposite sect of the Pharisees was, in Hasmonean times, yet in its infancy. The separation under Ezra had originated the party, and the manifest tendency of the Alexandrine, or Mizraimite, school cannot but have strengthened the Purists in their views; but the Mishna, or oral law, was not yet committed to writing, and the gradual development of dogma which, as time went on, surrounded not only that commentary, but also eventually the Gemara, or comment on the Mishna, with a halo of sanctity, can evidently not have been reached so early. The Sadducees and Pharisees may justly be compared to the English Evangelical and Ritualistic Church parties; but in 170 B.C. the Ritualists were only just arising, and the Evangelicals were the larger party.

During the captivity, the Jews had come into contact with the Persian dual religion, with all its angelic and demon forms, and their imagination had not been unaffected. It is remarkable that we find no word in the Old Testament which really expresses our notion of a disembodied powerful spirit; but this is not the case in later Jewish writings. The Talmud is full of ghost lore, and of the influence of good and evil spirits. The Cabbalistic book Zohar gives the names of many of the principal angels: Gabriel, Michael, Uriel, and Raphael, seraphs standing in front, to the right, to the left, and at the back of the throne of God; Duma, the angel of silence and death; Usiel

and Samchasai, lovers of the daughters of men; and Samiel, prince of the powers of the air, who is identified with the serpent and with the evil Ahriman of the Zend Avesta. There were spirits of water, hail, bread, and fruits, and demons who inhabited the meanest out-houses and assumed the most grotesque forms. In this mythology we recognise the influence, on a certain Jewish school, of an Aryan people, and the same spirit which saw a genius, or nymph, in every spring and stream.

The heretical school to which these tenets are ascribed was called Mehistanite, and was the oldest unorthodox Jewish sect, being traced back to the times of the captivity. The book of Tobit, dating not later than 200 B.C., is a production of this school, and in it Asmodeus and Raphael appear in a contest which reminds one of Persian dualism. Possession by evil spirits, as described in that book, was one of the prominent doctrines of the Mehistanites.

But in the time of Simon the Just, the successor of Ezra, another influence was brought to bear on the Jews—the influence of an Aryan nation far more powerful and civilised than the Persians; and the effect was, for the time, more important and more general. The visit of Alexander the Great resulted, as has been noted in the Introduction to this volume, in the establishment of a Jewish colony in Egypt, and, from the time of his conquest of Palestine, the

Jews were thrown into communication with the Greeks, and became familiar with their national customs and religious observances.

Returning—in disobedience to the spirit of the Law—to the land of bondage, the Jews were also once more brought into contact with the spiritual religion of Egypt at the very time at which they began to become acquainted with the philosophy of Greece. The great problem of the immortality of the soul was ever prominent in the thoughts of those who built the pyramids and invented the stern custom of judging the past lives of the dead. The same problem was discussed in every light by the various philosophic schools of Greece.

Alexandria, under the Ptolemies, became the gateway of the East where Oriental life touched Western civilisation, and where Rome, Antioch, and Carthage found a common centre of commerce and intellectual intercourse. There was thus a close connection between the school of the Mizraimites or Egyptian Jews, whose peculiar doctrines were due to the influence of heathen philosophy on Jewish religion, and the party of the Hellenisers, whose aim it was to assimilate the social customs of the nation to the manners of the Gentiles. A religious and a social movement of liberal character was taking place, and the name Mizraimite applied to the religious aspect, while that of Hellenist indicated the social.

On the speculative systems of Greek and Egyptian, the Jew looked from his own peculiar point of view. It was impossible for a nation, whose education since the time of Moses had tended solely to the abnegation of personal opinion and to implicit faith in the all-sufficiency of the Law, to accept freely the new philosophy. Yet the Egyptian Jews seem to have been attracted by Greek teaching, and it is indeed possible that the Mizraimites found themselves in a false position, for by returning to Egypt they had disobeyed the plain spirit of that law which forbade the King of Israel to do anything which might tend to induce a return to the land of bondage. They were thus naturally inclined to seek explanations other than those which appeared plainly on the face of their Sacred Books; and the same motives which led in the Jerusalem school to the most minute criticism and most careful "hedging round" of the Law, in order to secure the exact fulfilment of its precepts, gave rise in Egypt to mystic and allegorical interpretations which, like the specious evasions of the Pharisees, explained away the manifest original meaning of the Sacred Commandments, though they had become, through long custom, too much a part of the Jewish nature to allow of their being openly renounced.

The Sacred Books were written, moreover, in a classic language which was no longer generally under-

stood, and which held just the same relation to the common tongue that the Vulgate Latin holds to the modern Italian: Hebrew was the language of the educated, and, though easily translated, the Books of Moses were by themselves unintelligible. This difficulty had been overcome at Jerusalem by the expedient of public reading in the original, followed by interpretation in Aramaic; but this clumsy method seems to have been insufficient to satisfy the Alexandrine Jews, amongst whom, in the century following their establishment, there must have been many students who were anxious to study the Law, but who were only able to read Greek.

The immediate cause of the translation of the Sacred Books into Greek is, however, stated by Josephus to have been the desire of Ptolemy Philadelphus to understand Jewish institutions, and to add a version of their Law to his library. The Jews of Jerusalem were at this period feeling flattered by the honours which had been lavished upon them by powerful and civilised rulers. They had not yet discovered the danger which lay in lending an ear to the devices of the heathen; and the heresy of the Alexandrine school had not yet become sufficiently pronounced to excite that alarm and repugnance which, as will be seen, soon seized on the more conservative party. The royal request for experienced translators was met with courtesy by the High Priest,

Eleazar II., and in the 7th year of Ptolemy Philadelphus (B.C. 277), the seventy elders were sent to Alexandria to translate into Greek the Sacred Torah. How bitterly the nation afterwards repented its temporary backsliding in complying with the persuasion of the heathen, is evidenced in the subsequent establishment by the Pharisees of a fast on the 8th of Tebeth in memory of the translation, and in their prohibition to write copies of the Law with letters of gold, such as had been employed in the original Greek manuscript.

In the Septuagint version traces are still to be found of the latitudinarian views of its authors. The codex from which it was taken cannot have been identical with those from which the English text is derived. The anthropomorphisms of the Hebrew have been expunged, studied variations are also to be found, and passages occur which are not in our English Bible, notably in the fourth chapter of Genesis. In these respects the Greek translation approaches very closely to the Samaritan Pentateuch, but on the other hand it is generally admitted that these versions have often preserved the meaning of the original Hebrew, which was lost, later, by the Jerusalem school.

The translation of the Pentateuch seems to have been one of the main causes of the gradual estrangement which grew up between the Alexandrine school

and the orthodox party at Jerusalem; but at the time at which the story of the war of Independence opens, the Jews in Egypt were still directly under the authority of the High Priest in the Holy Land. The views of the Alexandrine Jews, or Mizraimites, were, however, already very advanced.

As early as 160 B.C. a Jewish priest of Alexandria, named Aristobulus, wrote and dedicated to Ptolemy VI. a work most characteristic of those peculiar tenets which resulted from an attempt to reconcile Faith and Philosophy. He contended that the Peripatetic philosophy was derived from the Law and the Prophets, and to these latter he gave throughout an allegorical interpretation. His works are full of quotations from Orpheus and Musæus, and are the precursors of those mystic interpretations of the plain letter of the Law which reached their fullest development in the writings of Philo, the contemporary of Christ.

It was in the Alexandrine school that the Cabbala sprung up and flourished. The Jews brought with them to Egypt the mystic doctrines of the Mehistanites, and combined them with the speculations of the Peripatetics, and with the idealism of the Egyptians. Hence arose that vast maze of allegorical and fanciful comment on the Books of Moses, which, in the time of Christ, stood side by side with the endless quibbles of the Pharisees, who were attempt-

ing to give precision to, and either to evade or to ensure exact fulfilment of, the very precepts which the Mizraimites were doing their utmost to explain away.

A short notice of the main features of that mystic study known as Cabbala, or "tradition," will serve to make clear the tendency of the Egyptian school of Jewish doctrine. The Cabbalists pretended that their dogmas were derived by direct tradition from Adam, and taught to him by the Angel Raziel. They thus far outwent the Talmudists in their pretensions, for the latter only claimed for their great work—the Mishna, or "second" law—an antiquity equal to that of the Mikra, or "written" law, of which it was supposed to be the necessary supplement.

Three studies were embraced under the name Cabbala, without including the practical Cabbala, which taught merely the construction of charms and talismans, such as are still used in Egypt. These three are known as Dogmatic, Metaphysical, and Numeric (or Symbolic) Cabbalas, and may be briefly noticed in turn.

Dogmatic Cabbala was the oldest of these mystic studies, and was intimately connected with the doctrines of the Mehistanites. It treated of the unseen world, and the treatise Zohar, "the book of splendour," gives the names of God and of His angels, which the Jews are said to have learned in Babylon, and also those of demons and of genii, the

latter being considered by the Cabbalists (as by the modern Arabs) to be a race intermediate between men and angels. The doctrines of metempsychosis, of possession, and of a double spirit inhabiting a single body, were part of this teaching; and the influence of the Zoroastrian dualism is traceable in the grouping of good angels under the "Angel of the Presence," while the evil spirits are arrayed under the authority of Samael, "Prince of the Powers of the Air."

The Metaphysical Cabbala was a yet deeper study, and presented a curious mixture of Persian dualism with the Greek doctrine of an infinite soul of the universe. The Cabbalists attacked the question of the origin of evil, and taught a beautiful truth when they regarded creation as an emanation of the Deity. Evil they treated not as a positive and antagonistic quality, but as negative, and as being a deficiency of the good, or, as they expressed it, a less close approach to the central light. A good parallel to such a doctrine may be found in Newton's theory of light, which regards darkness as negative, contrasting with Goethe's fanciful representation of darkness as a positive and opposite entity.

Creation was an emanation of God, according to the Cabbalists, and the development was three-fold. The "Ancient of Days" was manifested in idea, in speech, and in action. The idea was personified in the mysterious Wisdom which first appears in the

Book of Proverbs; the speech was typified by the Word, or Angel of the Presence; finally, action was shown in the creation of the Adam Kadmon, "the Old or First Adam," from whom all other living things were in order evolved.

Of Numerical Cabbala it is not necessary to speak fully. The study was too intricate and extensive to allow of brief description. The general idea was that of minute study of the characters in which the Sacred Books were written, according to various rules, for the interpretation of a symbolic and mystic hidden meaning which the letters were supposed to indicate. The study was again divided into three, but the oldest method of playing with the text consisted in the device called Atbash, which was a permutation of the letters after the fashion of an anagram. This practice was certainly as ancient as the time of Judas Maccabæus.

To modern students the Symbolic Cabbala appears to be a mere trifling with useless puzzles unworthy of mature intellects. It originated, nevertheless, in the extreme veneration with which the Jews regarded the Law of Moses, and in the idea that the Inspiring Spirit directed the choice of each letter of the text. The Cabbala exerted a powerful influence on the students of the dark ages, and many a curious superstition still lingering among us can be traced back to its forgotten doctrines.

Works imbued with the spirit of the Cabbalists were abundant in the time of the Hasmoneans, and a few of these are still left to us, as, for instance, the Wisdom of Solomon, a book dated about 150 B.C. Its doctrines approach to those of Philo, including the pre-existence of souls, the formation of the world from formless matter, the existence of a soul of the universe, the four cardinal virtues, free will, the belief in a "tempter," and, finally, the typical interpretation of Scripture.

In this book, probably the latest of the group including Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus, there is still no distinct teaching as to the immortality of the soul, or as to the resurrection; nor is the expectation of a future divine or temporal King expressed in it. Probably the author of the Wisdom of Solomon held with Philo that death was the true resurrection, or "standing up" (Anastasis) of the soul from the body. The righteous are promised eternal life (Wisdom ii. 15), as among the later Jewish schools, but whether in a spiritual or corporeal condition is left undefined, and we still find the echo of the old Sadducean materialistic doctrine, "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth? Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion."

It is not a little important to understand clearly what was the general Jewish expectation at this time with regard to a future Messiah, or anointed King, temporal or spiritual. If, at the time of the revolt, such an expectation had been general, there would no doubt have been a strong party which would have recognised in the appearance of Judas the fulfilment of their hopes. Yet in the history of the Hasmoneans we find no hint that he was ever so regarded. In the books above referred to, the familiar names "Son of Man" and "Anointed Prince" do not occur; and the dictatorship of the Hasmoneans was never accepted as more than a temporary arrangement, to last until, by the appearance of a faithful prophet, the original theocracy of the time of Samuel should be re-established.

The development which had been attained at the Christian era with respect to the doctrine of an Anointed Prince, we may gather from the New Testament, and from the later Talmudic works and Targums. A Prince of the House of David was to be born at Bethlehem of Judea, and to rule the people of Israel. Some sects supposed this reign of Messias to be temporal, and to precede the general resurrection of the righteous; other sects held the reign to be spiritual, and that it would succeed the renewal of all things. In support of these discordant views, the prophecies of Isaiah and Zechariah, the Psalms, and

other portions of the Old Testament were quoted, and the word Messiah was inserted into the Targums, or Aramaic paraphrases of these passages. Such expectations are found fully developed in works like the so-called "Psalms of Solomon," and in other Jewish writings of the Herodian period.

In the earlier works, dating from the Hasmonean times, we find no such expectations expressed. In the Bible, the references on which the Jews afterwards relied have not, as a rule, that definite character which distinguishes those in the Psalms of Solomon, and in the Book of Ecclesiasticus we find an eloquent prayer for restoration, such as might well date from the time of the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes (Ecclesiasticus xxxvi.), yet there is no mention of Messiah in the whole passage. "Take away the adversary" is the prayer of the son of Sirach, "raise up prophets," and "let thy prophets be found faithful."

In later times the two hopes thus cherished stood side by side; the faithful prophet and the anointed prince were both awaited. Still later, in the 4th and 5th centuries, the passage in the Pentateuch relating to a future prophet was explained by the Rabbis to refer to the succession of prophets from Moses to Malachi. At the time which we are now considering, the prophet alone is the prominent figure, and the anointed prince is unnoticed. This is no doubt the simplest explanation of the fact that Judas Maccabæus

never claimed, and never was believed, to be the "Lord's Anointed."

The expectation of a future prophet is clearly brought out in the Books of the Maccabees. It was an ancient and orthodox dogma, and one which still survives among the modern Samaritans. It was founded on a very distinct promise in the Law of Moses—"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." And this hope formed the basis of all the temporary arrangements for self-government which the Jews made under the direction of Judas and Simon. The stones of the desecrated altar were laid up "until there should come a prophet to show them what should be done." Simon was accepted as Governor and High Priest "until there should arise a faithful prophet."—1 Macc. xiv. 41. And according to some, it was Elias himself who was to return.—Malachi iv. 5; Ecclus. xlviii. 11.

The present sketch of religious sects among the Jews about 170 B.C. would be incomplete without a short notice of the Samaritans as then existing.

At the present time the small remnant of this interesting people surviving at Shechem presents probably the nearest approach to original Judaism that we can find anywhere. They hold the old Sadducean views with regard to the Law and the

future life; they observe the Passover strictly in accordance with the ordinances in Exodus; and they believe that a prophet like unto Moses is still to be expected before the final destruction of the world.

Of the Samaritans, we have two accounts extant—the one their own, the other that of their enemies, the Jews. The first is unfortunately so late as to be of comparatively little value, though there seems reason to believe that the author of the "Samaritan Chronicle" drew from older authentic sources. The Jewish accounts of the Samaritans—those of Josephus and of the Talmudists—are so evidently warped by the feeling of bitter sectarian hate, that they cannot be received without the greatest hesitation. Unfortunately, we do not find in the Bible materials sufficient to enable us to determine how far the later Jewish writings can be believed. The inhabitants of Samaria are spoken of in the Old Testament as a mixed people, including the Cuthean colonists; but, on the other hand, it is clear that many of the Israelites of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh remained in their native land even after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chr. xxxiv. 9; Jer. xli. 5), and it is from these sons of Joseph that the Samaritans claim and have always claimed to be descended, while their priestly family was admitted by the Jews, even as late as the 12th century, to be derived from the stock of Aaron. The distinctive physiognomy of the

modern Samaritans, approaching as it does closely to that of the Jews, is a strong confirmation of their claim, and the existence of an ancient and valuable codex of the five books of Moses at Shechem may also be cited in favour of the Israelite origin of the Samaritans.

The Jews have, on the other hand, generally maintained that their enemies are descendants of the Cuthean colonists. In a few passages of Josephus and in the Targums they are, however, called Sidonians—an assertion which can hardly be reconciled with the former assertion that they are Cuthim.

The temple built by Sanballat on Gerizim had already become a rival to that at Jerusalem by 170 B.C. The bitter enmity which arose in the time of Ezra between Jews and Samaritans was caused by the refusal of the former to allow any participation in the work of restoration at the Jerusalem Temple; or, according to the opposite account, by the secession of the Jews from the rest of Israel, who were proceeding to Gerizim to rebuild the Temple on the site of the old "Sanctuary of Jehovah." This enmity had become deeper and deeper as, during three centuries, wrongs and retaliations had accumulated; and at the period with which we are now concerned, the Samaritans had, moreover, succeeded in extending their frontier to the south, so as to include places afterwards recovered by the Jews.

Samaritans were to be found in Alexandria, and here also they lived at enmity with the Jews. The Samaritans claim that it was from their version of the Law, not from that of the Jews, that the Greek translation was made in Alexandria; and though the authority for this statement is very late, we have still the curious fact that the Greek version approaches much closer to the Samaritan than to that later Masoretic text established by the Pharisees, and from which our English translation is derived. Impartial scholars have often pointed out that, in many cases, the true meaning is best preserved by the Alexandrine text.

In Hasmonean times, fierce disputes arose in Alexandria with regard to the true chosen site of the Temple. The Samaritans were able to point out that while Ebal and Gerizim are mentioned as being the mountains of the curses and blessings, Jerusalem is not noticed at all by name in the Law of Moses. The Jews appear to have contented themselves with a *de facto* argument, and urged that foreign princes had always done exclusive honour to the Jerusalem sanctuary.

According to Josephus, the decision of Ptolemy Philometer was in favour of the Jews, and the Samaritans were beheaded (Ant. xiii. 3, 4); but it would be interesting to hear the opposite side of the story. Josephus was a Pharisee—one of that party which

specially detested the Cuthim. He is known to have made either a blunder or a wilful misstatement with regard to Sanballat, for his account of the building of the Gerizim temple contradicts the account of the Book of Ezra, unless we admit the unlikely hypothesis that there were two Sanballats in succeeding centuries, each allied by marriage to the then reigning High Priest in Jerusalem. The statements of Josephus in matters like these, where his sectarian prejudices interfere, must therefore be accepted with caution.

It remains briefly to sum up the main points of the questions touched on in the preceding pages.

At the time immediately preceding the revolt of Judas, we find that the orthodox Jewish tenets were those of the Sadducees, and that the party of the Pharisees was still in its infancy. The devout Jews were in expectation of the appearance of a prophet promised by Moses, but, as far as the existing literature of the subject goes, we have no proof that the definite belief in a future Anointed Prince of the House of David had arisen as early as the commencement of the Hasmonean period.

The heretical sect of the Mizraimites, holding the mystic dogmas of the Alexandrine Jews, had, as we have seen, become a very important religious school. Their peculiar views had spread even in Palestine, and the admiration of Greek customs among all the free-thinking Jews, whether Egyptian or Syrian, had given

great offence to the orthodox even in Jerusalem, as will be narrated in a future chapter.

Such was the condition of religious thought when Antiochus Epiphanes came to the throne. Had he been content to leave the Jews to themselves, and had he given time for the gradual spread of the Hellenising heresy which was sapping the very foundations of Judaism, the history of the world must have been materially modified, and the basis on which Christianity was first founded might perhaps never have been consolidated. A reaction had commenced in a very small but zealous party, which preserved the tradition of "separation" handed down from the time of Ezra, and which demanded a return to the strictest and most literal interpretation of the Law of Moses, and the entire repudiation of everything derived from the heathen outer world. This party only required a leader to rally it, and a persecutor to fan the flame of its zeal. The persecutor was Antiochus Epiphanes; the leader proved to be Judas Maccabæus.

CHAPTER III.

THE REVOLT.

170 B.C.—165 B.C.

"AFTER the Macedonians obtained supremacy in the East, King Antiochus endeavoured to root out the Jewish superstition, but was hindered by a Parthian war from reforming this vilest of people."—Tacitus, *History*, v. 8.

With these few but bitter words the Roman historian contemptuously dismisses the history of the great struggle for freedom, successfully carried out by the Hebrew nation, which he hated.

It is not, however, in such a spirit that an impartial student of history will regard the episode of the revolt from the Greek rule which Judas Maccabæus conducted. The position of an independent Prince, or Ethnarch, in Palestine may have had little political importance at the time, for the country had neither trade nor harbours, and its whole extent was not much greater than the area of Yorkshire. Yet we cannot now forget that Palestine was the cradle of Christianity,

and that the Jewish religion, which Judas saved and defended at a time when its entire extinction was threatened, became the basis of the faith of Christendom, and has not only shaped the history of Europe, but still forms one of the main springs of modern politics.

A silent revolution was taking place in Jewish thought and habits at the time when Antiochus Epiphanes came to the throne. The influence of Greek culture was beginning to be felt not only in Egypt or Syria, among the foreign Jews, but even in Palestine and in the Holy City. The toleration shown by Alexander the Great had brought Jew and Gentile into new and friendly relations, and a ruler as wise and far-seeing as was the great conqueror would have been content to allow the movement to develop itself with results which we cannot calculate. The obstinate and hasty measures enforced by Epiphanes saved Judaism in attempting to destroy it, and created the reaction which purged it at once of every foreign element, and stamped it with a distinct character of its own.

It has been already narrated in the Introduction that two claimants were at this time struggling for the office of High Priest—Jesus, or Jason, the rightful heir, supported by the national voice; and Menelaus, also called Onias, the nominee of Antiochus. It must not, however, be supposed that two contending

parties were represented by the rivals, for both were deeply tainted with Hellenistic heresy, and the contest was purely personal and political.

Menelaus and his companions lived at the Court of Antiochus in open defiance of the Law of Moses. Jason, meantime, was busy in Jerusalem familiarising the astonished inhabitants with Greek customs, which raised in the breasts of the older and more conservative feelings of mingled contempt and wrath. Among the charges which have been recorded against him is one already noticed—that he introduced among the young men of good family the fashion of wearing a hat; and trivial as this innovation may appear to us in Europe, those who know the East will appreciate the importance which must have been attached to the change, and will remember the veneration with which the national head-dress is regarded.

A more serious innovation was, however, the establishment of a gymnasium in Jerusalem, under the western walls of the Temple—the remains of the building being perhaps still recognisable in an ancient chamber recently discovered. In this profane place, even the priests of Jehovah were to be seen engaging in unseemly struggles, casting aside their sacred robes, and contending for popular applause in the heathen game of Discus. To a proud and dignified Semitic people, nothing can have appeared more degrading, or unworthy of the sacred vocation, than

this participation in performances which they must have regarded as fit only for hired clowns, or for the heathen.

Heathen festivals also began to be celebrated in Palestine, and were attended by the Jews, in direct disobedience to the Mosaic commands. The feasts of Bacchus were honoured in the Holy Land, and Jason sent representatives with rich presents to attend the games in honour of Hercules, celebrated under the auspices of the Kings of Antioch every fifth year at Tyre.

Another festival, which seems probably to be of heathen origin, was that celebrated twice a-year at Motza, in a deep, well-watered valley west of Jerusalem. The Jewish maidens came out to meet the young men at this place with songs and dances—a ceremony very contrary to the spirit of Judaism; and though said to commemorate the old festival of Shiloh, when the Benjamites chose their wives from the women dancing in the vineyards, this feast calls to mind irresistibly the processions of the Greek mysteries.

On such innovations the orthodox looked in much the same spirit in which the "Old Turk" of our day regards our western customs and our European games, or athletics. As he considers every law to be vicious if not based on the Korân, so did the devout Jew regard laws at variance with the commands of

Moses. As the Moslem looks with horror on the proposal to place Christian and Mahommedan on an equal footing, so did the Jew regard the proposal to raise the Gentile to a position of equality with himself. But yet more—as the "young Turkish party" too often apes the irreligion and immorality not less than the dress of the West, so did the Hellenisers imitate the vices and depraved customs, as well as the costume, of the Greeks.

Such was the state of national feeling when the savage and disappointed Antiochus formed his rash project of destroying all that was distinctive in Jewish customs and religion. He judged the temper of the people, no doubt, from the renegade Jews whom he had encountered in Antioch. He understood neither the attachment with which the bulk of the nation regarded their ancient Law, nor the stubborn courage and endurance of which the Jews were capable.

Returning from his fourth Egyptian campaign, Antiochus detached a party under one of his officers, Apollonius, to go to Jerusalem. Apollonius was made Governor of Palestine, and instructed not merely to collect the taxes, but to put down, by stringent measures, every distinguishing Jewish custom. Circumcision was forbidden, the Sabbath was to be desecrated, the copies of the Law to be collected and burnt, the Jews to be forced to eat swine's flesh, and

the Temple to be desecrated by foreign worship, and re-consecrated to Jupiter Olympus. We gather that the same edict was to be enforced also against the Samaritans and their Temple at Gerizim, and that Apollonius, after desolating Jerusalem, went next to fulfil his mission in the northern capital of Shechem.

The new Governor entered Jerusalem peacefully, but, when once established, his cruel edict fell like a thunderbolt on the nation. A terrible persecution followed. Women who had dared to circumcise their children were tortured and paraded with their murdered infants hanging round their necks; aged elders were put to a cruel and lingering death, refusing to eat the flesh of the unclean beast. But the stubborn spirit of the nation could not be broken, though the party of the Hellenisers was so strong in the capital that it was impossible for the few devout Jews there left to do more than meet martyrdom courageously. The noble reply of the aged Eleazar when under torture, shows the manner in which Jewish elders refused even the semblance of apostacy. "It becometh not our age," he said, "in anywise to dissemble, whereby many young men might think that Eleazar, being four-score years old and ten, was now gone to a strange religion."

The Greek policy triumphed for a moment, and incense was burnt at pagan altars in the streets of

Jerusalem. A citadel was erected on the little knoll of Millo, or Akra, which overlooked the lower city. It stood just where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands, and formed a stubborn stronghold, which was not overthrown for twenty-seven years. It was garrisoned by Macedonians, and by renegade Jews from among the Hellenisers.

On the 15th day of Cisleu (December), in this memorable year, the "abomination of desolation" was set up, an idol altar standing upon the great rude stone altar in the Temple Court. Ten days later, sacrifices of swine were offered on it, and the fane reared for Jehovah was declared consecrated to Jupiter Olympus. The Jewish ritual was abolished, and Greek rites substituted for it.

Thus, in the pathetic language of the Chronicler, "Her sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness; her feasts were turned into mourning, her Sabbaths into reproach, her honour into contempt. And there was very great wrath upon Israel."

A curious and instructive story is related in the Talmud connected with this profanation of the Temple. Miriam, the daughter of a priest of the course of Bilgah, saw the altar with the idol altar upon it, and struck it with her shoe, exclaiming, "Thou insatiable wolf, how much longer wilt thou consume the wealth of Israel, when thou canst not help in time of need." For this offence the course of

Bilgah was in later times deprived of its appointed chamber in the Temple. The story may, perhaps, be thought to indicate a sort of superstitious worship of the altar itself among the less educated Jews of the time, resembling the Moslem worship of the two sacred rocks of Mecca and Jerusalem, which are regarded as possessed of supernatural powers, and even of speech.

Although it was at Jerusalem that the violent decree of Antiochus seems first to have been put in force, it was not there that the desperation of the Jews first lent them courage to resist. The same edict was sent out to every town and village in the country. At the capital, the Hellenists were probably in a majority, and the few orthodox Jews on whom persecution fell were unable to resist; but the views and habits of the villagers were, as has been shown in the last chapter, entirely different from those of the educated townsmen. They had, no doubt, adhered with much greater loyalty to the ancient customs and beliefs of their forefathers, and it was thus far more difficult to carry out the resolution proposed by Antiochus in the wild rural districts remote from the capital.

The ancient main road from Jerusalem to Lydda descended the stony hill of Bethhoron, and ran along a mountain spur towards the plain. About a

mile to the north of this main road, the little village of Modin was built upon the southern slopes of a rocky valley.

The surrounding country was bare of trees, consisting of chalky limestone, with terraces built against the hill-sides, and ancient sepulchres, quarries, and reservoirs cut in the rock. The village lay below the crest of the hill, and had a remarkable rocky knoll immediately south of it—a conical hump on the hill-side, with a few scattered olives on the top. This knoll commanded a view of the sea. The little hills of the Shephelah, or "lowland," district could be seen stretching westwards, covered with copse in parts, and crowned here and there with small villages. At their feet, amid dark groves of olive, lay the white town of Lydda, and behind it the broad brown plain of Sharon extended to a breadth of ten miles. Furthest of all, the yellow gleaming sand-dunes bounded the rich arable land, and the waters of the "Great Sea" shone brightly under the afternoon sun. The prospect was extensive, and not devoid of interest; but the outline of the hills was tame, and the absence of forest-trees combined with the greyness of the rocky limestone on the hills to give an air of barrenness to a country which was really fertile.

To this little village, some twenty miles from the capital, and standing away from the high-road, an aged priest, named Mattathias, had retired from

Jerusalem. The Temple was desolate, the ritual of the Jewish temple service had been forbidden, and there was no longer any regular recurrence of those visits which (as already described) the orders of priests paid twice a-year to the Holy City. Disgusted with the innovations of the Hellenisers, Mattathias retired into the country to mourn the fallen condition of the chosen people.

Mattathias had five sons—all grown men—all of whom were destined to become famous. Johanan, the eldest, was also called Caddis, "the saint;" Simon, called Thassi, the second, was esteemed the wisest and most prudent of the brethren; Judas Maccabæus, "the hammerer," was the boldest and most skilful in war; Eleazar, the fourth, was called Avaran; and the crafty Jonathan, youngest, but perhaps most energetic of the five, had already earned the title Apphus, or "the wary." We may reasonably conjecture that the young men were remarkable for their personal beauty; for that fatal gift was, at all events in later times, distinctive of the Hasmonean race, and the last of the line, Aristobulus, was no less famous for his beauty than was his unhappy sister, Mariamne, whose charms made Herod forget even the fascination of Cleopatra herself. The family name of Hasmonean was derived from that of Hasmon, the great-grandfather of Mattathias, and through him they traced their descent from the sons of Joarib—the first of the twenty-four

courses of priestly families, and thus to Eleazar, the son of Aaron.

Mattathias was a man of distinction in Modin—a ruler and an influential elder. When, therefore, the edict of Antiochus was carried out into the country, and the King's commissioners came to Modin, their first object was to endeavour to persuade, or bribe, the leading family into compliance with the rule which directed that every Jew should offer sacrifice to the heathen divinities. Had they succeeded in gaining the countenance of Mattathias, the envoys would probably have found it an easy task to induce the poor and ignorant villagers to follow his example. But such compliance was scarcely to be expected from one who had fled from Jerusalem on account of the spread of heresy which he there witnessed.

The spirit of the old man was, moreover, roused by the sight of a renegade Jew, whose fears had induced him to perform the sacrifice required. The memory of the famous deed of the zealous Phinehas, his ancestor, encouraged Mattathias to strike a blow for his religion and for the covenant of his fathers. He ran upon the apostate, and slew him on the idol altar, which had been raised in accordance with the royal order—possibly on the knoll south of the village; and he went further yet, and slew the King's commissioner, while the Greeks were driven out of the place and the heathen altar demolished.

Thus the first outbreak of the national revolt was due to the unpremeditated act of a single aged man. A reaction of feeling followed immediately, and the villagers saw the danger to which they would be exposed so soon as the news reached Jerusalem, and the Macedonian garrison of the fortress should be sent to punish them. Hastily driving off their cattle, they fled across the watershed to the dreary desert of Bethaven, above the Jordan valley, where they endeavoured to hide themselves in caves, subsisting on the wild herbs of the wilderness.

Such a hegira may still be witnessed in unhappy Palestine, when a whole village marches off, with its flocks and herds, to find refuge in the waste lands from the punishment which the peasants dread in retaliation for the violent deed provoked by the exactions of some tyrannous tax-gatherer or lawless soldier.

The villagers of Modin formed a small band, to which the discontented and zealous quickly gathered. The Chasidim, or Puritans, were the first to join, and the force of the insurgents augmented rapidly. They took courage at length to undertake a guerilla warfare against the Greek Governor and against the apostate villages, and were successful in many night attacks. They compelled their wavering countrymen to adhere to the Law; they pulled down the idol altars, and made the Jews who had submitted to Antiochus circumcise their children.

The party was distinguished at a very early period by its strict orthodoxy, and by its determination to restore the most archaic institutions of the national religion. Yet, curiously enough, one of the first acts of Mattathias was a modification of the Law of Moses. A band of a thousand insurgents were attacked on the Sabbath day in a cavern, and as they would not break the Sabbath rest by using their weapons, their strict observance of the Law cost them all their lives.

Mattathias, hearing of this catastrophe, took counsel with his followers, and pointed out that unless some modification of this understanding of the Law were made, the heathen would take advantage of the Sabbath, and the devout Jews would in time be entirely extirpated. It was therefore decreed that self-defence against Gentiles was to be held lawful even on the Sabbath. The decision was sensible, yet it served to show how impossible it would be to adhere to every minute observance of a Law promulgated at so remote an age, and under circumstances so different from those of the time of the revolt. The alteration was more in the spirit of the Hellenists than in that of the conservative and zealous party of the Chasidim.

Thus for a year the insurrection continued to smoulder, when, in 167 B.C., Mattathias died, no doubt from the effects of the hardships and exertions which the old man had been forced to undergo in the rough

life of the desert. His address to his sons, though perhaps not strictly historic, is illustrative of the spirit which animated the Jews. It concluded with the exhortation to consider Simon as the wisest counsellor; Judas as the ablest leader. "To recompense fully the heathen, and take heed to the commandments of the Law."

It was thus that, in the year 167 B.C., Judas Maccabæus found himself at the head of a small, but resolute and united band of enthusiasts, who were determined not only to resist the tyranny of Antiochus, but to free their brethren from both the Greeks and the Hellenistic Jews, and to re-establish the independence of the nation.

The province of Judea was an outlying part of the possessions of Antiochus, and the revolt, which seems at first to have had the character of a guerilla war, or brigandage, such as often precedes a great national struggle, did not raise any great amount of alarm at Antioch. The Governor of Samaria, Apollonius—to whom Judea had been also assigned in 168 B.C.—collected the local forces and advanced against Judas; but he was defeated and slain, and his sword was ever after used by Maccabæus, "and therewith he fought all his life long."

No doubt the aims and views of the party of which Judas was the head expanded with time and with success. The impetuosity of Mattathias had forced

them into revolt, and at first they fought merely for self-preservation. They then became emboldened so far as to attack the villagers, and, a little later, they even ventured to oppose the Greek garrison of the Akra citadel, and the Samaritan militia under Apollonius. But a far graver danger was brought upon them by the defeat of Apollonius; for no sooner had it come to the ears of the King in Antioch, than he despatched his general, Seron, with an army of regular troops, then garrisoning Cœlesyria.

Seron's orders were yet more imperative and violent than those which Antiochus had given Apollonius. The small party of the orthodox was to be annihilated; the Jewish religion was to be utterly stamped out; the land was to be colonised by strangers, and divided by lot among them.

Thus, in the year 166 B.C., the Greek army marched down the plain of Sharon, and commenced its ascent towards Jerusalem by the main road from Lydda, passing by Modin, the home of Judas, and advancing on the steep ascent of Bethhoron, where, in about half-a-mile, the road rises 500 feet to gain the top of a long, narrow, rocky ridge—a spur of the watershed mountains, flanked by deep and narrow ravines.

Against this formidable force the brave Judas advanced with a handful of men. His zeal and fearlessness, his military instinct and prudence, were alike evinced in this his first regular battle; and his choice

of position, guarding the top of this dangerous pass, showed qualities beyond those of a mere bandit chief.

The scenery was full of inspiring memories, for the rugged pass had more than once before been the scene of a Jewish victory. Beneath him, near the line of the Greek advance, Judas looked towards Modin, his home, where, even then, his aged father lay buried—the scene of the memorable episode which had opened his career. Behind him, on its stony knoll, amid open corn-lands, was Gibeon, and to the south-west was the broad, flat plain, skirted by low hills, and running down by the little village of Ajalon. Thus it was almost on the very spot where Joshua had stood, when he commanded the sun to stand still until Israel was avenged of his enemies, that Judas Maccabæus now awaited the new foes of his country. In imagination, he might already see them rolled back from the steep steel-grey slope of barren rock, crowned by a few straggling olives, down to the white hills and corn-plains beneath, even as the host of the five kings had been discomfited when overtaken by the great hail-storm on that bleak hill-side.

His followers, however, looked down on the Greek host, as it advanced towards the foot of the pass, with far other feelings. "How shall we be able," they said, "to fight against so great a multitude, and so strong, seeing we are ready to faint with fasting all this day?" But Judas was able to infuse into them some-

thing of his own spirit, reminding them that they fought for their lives and for the Law, and that strength was not to be sought in numbers, but from the God who had given victory to Joshua.

Falling suddenly on the enemy, with every advantage of ground, and in country suited for an irregular attack, Judas gained his first real victory on the field which was destined to see also his last success. The scattered Greeks were pursued even further into the broad Philistine plains than were the Amorites after the first battle of Bethhoron, and the Greek generals were, apparently, convinced that the northern pass, which could be held by so small a force, was not the best line of advance on Jerusalem.

The independence of the Jews was thus, for the moment, secured, and Antiochus was not only shamed by the defeat of his army, but his treasury was also impoverished by the loss of the Judean taxes. His attention was thus turned to Parthia, and to the rich temple of Nanæa, the "desire of women" (Dan. xi. 37), in Elymais; and leaving to his generals the task of subjugating the Jews, from whom he had already extorted the riches of the Jerusalem temple, he appointed Lysias guardian of his boy-heir, and departed, early in 165 B.C., on his last fatal campaign.

Three new generals, Ptolemy, Nicanor, and Gorgias, were quickly despatched by Lysias to re-conquer the stubborn corner of hill-country where Judas held

his own: a force of no less than 40,000 footmen and 7000 horse is said to have been under their command. Warned by the fate of Seron, they did not attempt to face the difficulties of the Bethhoron pass, but prepared to ascend by the main road which leads up to Jerusalem from the west, by which means they might be able to hem in the rebels between the Greek army on the south and the Samaritans on the north.

The force now sent against Judas appears to have been considered overwhelming; and so certain were its leaders of success, that they allowed merchants to follow the camp, who were provided with gold and silver to give for the slaves they hoped to buy, and with fetters to place on their limbs. Marching southwards, along the flat plain of Sharon, they encamped by the town of Emmaus, at the edge of the hills, their route being almost exactly that which the English afterwards took under Richard Cœur de Lion in their advance on Jerusalem from Acre.

But the same spirit which had animated Judas at Bethhoron supported him even in presence of this mighty army. His second victory was perhaps the most brilliant of all his battles; and, from the similarity of its tactics, it might be called the Maccabæan Austerlitz.

Jerusalem itself lay almost entirely in ruins. The fierce persecution of the fatal year 168 B.C. had

decimated its population. The Hellenist renegades, and the foreign mercenaries who had been introduced as a garrison by Apollonius, were shut up in the tower which stood on the lofty knoll of Millo, or Akra. The walls of the city had been pulled down, and the desecrated temple was deserted and ruinous. Thus it was not in the capital that the zealous devotees assembled for those religious exercises by which, like the Covenanters, they prefaced their fierce onslaught on the heathen. Reverting in memory to the primitive times of Samuel, they assembled in the place where he had gathered Israel before the great victory of Ebenezer, and spent the day in prayer and fasting at Mizpeh, immediately north of the city, where formerly the Tabernacle had stood, and near which the Jews had encountered Alexander the Great on his memorable visit to Jerusalem. Clothed in sackcloth and covered with ashes, they lamented the sins of their nation, and implored the Divine help, while the flame of fanaticism was aroused by the exhibition of a copy of the Sacred Torah, which the heathen had desecrated by paintings of their images.

As night came on, the army was arrayed in the primitive formation employed by their forefathers; captains of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens were appointed, and, in strict accordance with the commands of Moses, the newly-married men, the vine-dressers, and even the timid and unwilling, were

dismissed from the picked body which the five famous brothers were to lead against the enemy.

In all these preparations we cannot fail to note an intentional imitation of the actions of their forefathers by the zealous and orthodox party of the Chasidim. The Divine favour was only to be gained by a strict observance of the Divine ordinances, as made known to Moses or Samuel. As under Samuel the Israelites had assembled at Mizpeh, so they did now under Judas; and almost in the steps of the former host, they now advanced on their enemies in the low-lands.

A long night-march of some twenty miles brought the Jews within sight of the Greek host at dawn. By that very road by which the traveller now generally first approaches the Holy City they must have come down, crossing deep valleys and long ridges clothed with copse, emerging through the narrow pass now called "The Gate of the Valley," into the bare chalky hill country which surrounds Emmaus, and runs out on the south side of the little plain of Ajalon.

Arriving thus on the south side of the enemy's position, Judas arrayed and exhorted his men—"For it is better for us to die in battle," he said, "than to behold the calamities of our people and our sanctuary." The vanguard only of the enemy had as yet arrived—8000 men, under Gorgias—and the promptitude of

the Jewish attack indicates the military talent of their leader, who thus fell upon the enemy before his forces were entirely concentrated.

The news of the gathering at Mizpeh had already been brought to the Greek camp by some of the Akra garrison; and Gorgias, hoping to surprise the Jews before they expected him, had started from his camp with 5000 of his best men, and, guided over the mountains by the "men of the fortress," had actually passed by the Jewish force, which was descending by the less known southern road.

Thus the battle of Emmaus may be compared to that of Austerlitz, in which Napoleon allowed the greater part of the Austrian force to advance on his communications, and hurling his main body against the right wing of the enemy, which was weakened by the advance of the left, cut the army of Austria in two, and defeated each half in detail. So also Judas now fell, to the sound of the silver trumpets, with his whole force on the 3000 Greeks in camp, and cut in two the army of Gorgias, the left wing being already too far advanced into the intricate hill-country to afford any assistance to the right. The Greeks in the camp at Emmaus little suspected how close the foe was to them. They were unarmed and unmounted. The forces of Judas were equal in numbers, and though he had no cavalry, the nature of the ground was such as to render the deficiency unimportant.

So soon as the compact companies of the Jewish host became visible, marching across the swelling hills and dark against the brightening dawn, the Greeks armed hastily, and went out to meet them; but Judas had again contrived to have the advantages of higher ground and of surprise. The heathen were thus soon discomfited, driven into the plain, and pursued for five miles south-west to the strong fortress of Gezer, which stands on a bastion of hill projecting into the Philistine plain, and which was at that time in the power of the Greeks. The panic-stricken remnant fled yet further to the south and west, to Jamnia and Ashdod, on the shores of the sea, twenty miles from the battle-field.

But Judas was too prudent a general to allow his forces to scatter in pursuit, or to become disorganised in looting the abandoned camp. "Be not greedy of the spoils," he said, "inasmuch as there is a battle before us." His position between the two halves of the enemy seems to have recalled to his mind—or to that of the chronicler who puts the words in his mouth—that of Israel in the Red Sea; and though one wave had been beaten back, a greater one was now surging from the rocky hills, for Gorgias had heard the din of battle, and had seen the black column of smoke rising from the burning tents in his camp at Emmaus. Perceiving that some disaster had occurred in rear, he now hastily retraced his steps,

and the heads of his columns were seen emerging from the folds of the mountains.

The battle was, however, already won. At the sight of their strongly-fortified camp in flames, and of the Jewish army drawn up at the foot of the hill awaiting their attack, a panic struck the Greeks, and they fled without striking a blow.

The spoil of the deserted camp was rich and various. Gold, silver, blue silk, Tyrian purple, and other riches fell into the hands of the Jews, and perhaps the allotted portion of the spoil formed the foundation of the great wealth afterwards possessed by the Hasmonean family. The return to Jerusalem after the second victory was triumphant and joyful; and among the three "Battles of the Passes" which were fought during the campaign of the years 166 and 165 B.C., that of Emmaus was afterwards considered to have contributed most to the deliverance of the nation.

The news of this second defeat at the second pass leading to Jerusalem reached Lysias, who was advancing with the main body of the Greek army. His forces were swelled to 60,000 men by the levies raised on the march and by the remnants of Seron's and Gorgias' armies, with which he formed a junction; but he determined not again to attempt an approach by the western passes, but to endeavour to reach the formidable stronghold formed by the natural rock-

wall of mountains round Jerusalem by the easier ascent on the south-west. Judas, however, had in this contest the strategical advantage of interior lines. His position was taken up on the watershed, near Jerusalem, from which point the roads to the various passes radiated. Thus he could never be surprised, and was able to confront the foe after a short march, and to choose his ground, while the enemy wandered round him in the plains.

Lysias would appear to have advanced by the broad and open valley of Elah, the scene of so many conflicts between the Philistines and Israel under Saul and David. Ascending by the road which leads by Hareth, the Greeks gained the watershed just south of Bethsur, some twelve miles from the capital, on the way to Hebron. The shed is lowest at this point, and a narrow pass leads by a beautiful spring, under the rocky scarp where Bethsur then stood, west of the road, while to the east a rounded hill rises above a low cliff towards the mountain village of Halhul. This pass forms a position not easily turned, and it was here that the indefatigable Judas had posted himself, barring the main road along the watershed to Jerusalem.

It was no longer a small band that the patriot mustered. The victory of Bethhoron gave him an army; the more brilliant offensive action at Emmaus swelled that army to 10,000 men. The Jews began

to understand that a great deliverer had arisen, and they flocked to the camp of Judas.

As the scenery of Bethhoron had recalled the remembrance of Joshua to Judas' mind—as the position of his army between the two Greek hosts at Emmaus reminded him of Israel in the Red Sea—so now, as he looked down on the rugged hills covered by the copses of Hareth to the great valley of Elah, where Adullam and Shochoh had once barred the way against Philistine invasion, the memory of the shepherd king who had defended the mountains of Judah in this same district seems to have risen to his thoughts, and the very scene of the old battle with the giant, which was spread beneath him, gave good augury for his impending conflict with the giant host of the Greeks.

"Blessed art thou, O Saviour of Israel!" were the words of his prayer, "who didst quell the violence of the mighty man by the hand of thy servant David."

An attack followed, in which the Jews again had the advantage of the higher ground. The confidence inspired by former victory outweighed the inferiority in numbers. The army of Lysias was defeated and dispersed, and that general fled to Antioch to gather fresh forces for a yet more formidable attack.

By these three famous victories at Bethhoron, Emmaus, and Bethsur, Judas accomplished the liberation of his countrymen from the yoke of the

Seleucidæ. For the next two years he was left undisturbed, and even ventured on expeditions which seem to have had for an object the restoration of the kingdom as it had been under Solomon. The Greeks found themselves in presence of a far more serious task than they had expected, and it was no longer a question of crushing a small body of disaffected zealots, but of the re-conquest of the whole block of the Judean hills. At each of the three main passes, the generals of Antiochus had been repulsed with loss, and a regular campaign was necessary, for which preparations were now made at Antioch.

The first thought of Judas, after these signal successes, was the re-establishment of the national religion and the purification of the Temple. From the field of battle the host marched to ruined Jerusalem. It was winter. The Sanctuary was desolate; the rampart walls which Solomon had raised from the rock, and which Nehemiah had rudely restored, were half overthrown, and in places the great stones were cracked and blackened by fire. The broad area within was covered with thistles, and the wild plants, just sprouting rankly after the first rains of winter, had forced their way between the flagstones of the inner cloisters. The wild olives and other shrubs had straggled over the outer court; the chambers round the platform were torn down; the gates were burnt; the long creepers hung down from

the walls. We can almost picture to the eye the desolation of the Holy House by a comparison with the present condition of parts of the Temple area.

The passionate outburst of grief with which the liberators looked on the desolation of their Temple, evidences the national pride in, and affection for, a building that was not only the centre of that faith which formed the mainspring of their existence, but was also their one architectural triumph, and their ideal of all that was grand and beautiful in art.

Another eyesore in the scene was the dark tower on Millo, which overtopped the Temple ramparts, and formed the stronghold of renegades and oppressors. A body of troops from Judas' army was detached to invest this castle; for, though successful in the field, the Jewish leader appears to have had no engines or other requisites for conducting an attack on a regular fortress, and he contented himself with surrounding it, as a precaution against an unexpected sally.

The purification of the Temple was at once commenced. Priests of orthodox faith, untainted by any suspicion of Hellenistic heresy, were chosen to restore and cleanse the inner courts. The chambers were built up, the gates re-hung, and the desecrated altar on which swine had been sacrificed, and which a woman had struck in contempt, was pulled down. Stones for the new altar were sought in the valley of the Kedron, and dug out from red virgin earth,

without the use of iron. They were arranged in a wooden frame, and cemented together with mortar. The hollow horns were fashioned on wooden moulds, and, the framework being removed, the rude concrete structure was whitewashed all over.

It was not easy to deal with the stones of the old altar. Though no longer fit for the service of God, they had, nevertheless, been at one time consecrated, and it seemed doubtful to the scrupulous Purists, who now led the nation, whether it would be right to cast them out into a profane place. For such a predicament no precedent or direction could be found in the Law of Moses, and it appeared, therefore, to be a question which could only be settled by the authority of a divinely-commissioned messenger—of such a prophet as was expected shortly to appear. They, therefore, laid up the stones in a chamber at the north-west corner of the altar court, in the great gate-house called Moked, there to remain until a prophet should arise to show what should be done with them. In that chamber they remained until the time of Christ, and until the Holy House had been once more overthrown, once more restored and beautified, and yet again levelled to the ground. The Prophet with the required authority was never recognised, and the stones of the desecrated altar were finally scattered, no man knows where.

The 25th day of Cisleu was appointed for the

solemn re-consecration of the Sanctuary. It was a memorable anniversary. On that day the Angel had been seen by David standing on the hill-top by the rocky platform of Araunah's threshing-floor. On the same day, only three years before, the heathen had sacrificed swine on their idol altar. Thus it was an appropriate day on which to celebrate the restoration of the purity of Judaism and the defeat of the uncircumcised.

New veils had been made for the Temple, new tables of shewbread, and a new candlestick and incense altar. The vessels were all new, replacing those stolen by Antiochus, and crowns and shields of gold were hung in front of the Temple façade. So, with feasts and sacrifices, with psalms and music, with processions of priests bearing palm-branches, and with every expression of festivity, the dedication was celebrated for eight days. In memory of the event, a yearly "Feast of Lights" was ordained, and palm-branches were borne as at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Once more the solemn service of the Temple, so graphically described in the Mishna, was restored. In the darkness of the early morning, the master of the Temple came at an uncertain hour to summon the priests who watched round the fire in the gate-house of Moked. In the dusk they went out and fetched the lamb which had been pronounced spotless on the previous day. Standing without the altar

court, they watched the first streak of day spreading behind the black outline of Olivet, and over the steel-grey ridges of Moab, until the brightness had crept round southwards as far as the direction of Hebron. Then the appointed priest went in first, and in the dim light he bathed at the great laver, and his figure could be discerned mounting the long slope of the altar, until, from under the heavy, grey ashes, the red glow of the never-extinguished fire was stirred up, and the column of smoke was thickened by new fuel. Then, and not till then, the other priests ventured into the Sacred Court; and as daylight brightened and the city awoke, the early sacrifice was offered, and the daily service of the Temple proceeded in its appointed order.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VICTORIES OF JUDAS.

164 B.C.

THERE are few characters in history which can rank with Judas Maccabæus for purity of motive and unselfish patriotism. His whole life was passed in struggles for freedom, and in fighting the battles of his country; but his personal ambition was never gratified by any dignity bestowed on him. Jonathan, his brother, became High Priest in 153 B.C.; but for Judas no such reward was in store, and he was content to remain the military chief and political leader, without title, and without formal recognition.

The position which he wished to hold in the eyes of his countrymen was no doubt that of a "deliverer" —a successor of the many famous judges who had arisen in the old days, such as Gideon, Samson, or Joshua. He had raised himself to his position as leader of the liberating party by the force of his own character, and he now maintained his reputation by the wisdom with which he ruled.

The Hasmonean family belonged to the course of Joarib, but though of the sons of Aaron, they had no claim by blood to the office of High Priest. Judas made no attempt to alter the succession, or to usurp the dignity of the then living Pontiff. The miserable Onias was allowed to retain his nominal authority; but his name does not appear often in the history of this period, and, suspected as he was of the most latitudinarian views, he no doubt found it best to remain as quiet as possible, leaving the practical duties of his office to the liberators.

The kingly dignity might also have been thought tempting to the Maccabæan ambition, but the family could not claim descent from David, and the whole spirit of the revolt seems to have been rather in imitation of the primitive period of Samuel than of the later history of the Jewish monarchy. The prophecies, if understood to refer to a restoration of the temporal rule of a successor to David, must evidently have indicated that such a ruler would be of the House of David; but, as far as we can gather from the Book of Maccabees, the popular expectation was directed, as has already been explained, towards the appearance of a new prophet rather than to the re-establishment of independent native royalty.

The position actually held by Judas seems to have been that of *Messiah Malhamah*, or "the Anointed for War," an ancient office appointed by Moses

(Deut. xx. 2); the priest on whom it was conferred being in fact just what Judas became—the acting High Priest, accompanying the army in order to exhort the troops on the eve of battle.

The Jews, in the time subsequent to the first establishment of the kingdom, recognised two Messiahs, or "anointed" leaders: the first was the High Priest, christened with the holy oil with which Aaron had first been consecrated; the second was the *Messiah Neged*, or "Anointed Chief," of whom Saul was the first. It was not until after the death of Judas that the Hasmoneans introduced an innovation into the Jewish constitution, by uniting the two offices in one, and the first and greatest of the brethren contented himself with the humbler position of *Messiah Malhamah*, or War-deputy to the High Priest Onias.

The small extent of territory which had been recovered is not at first easily appreciated. The lands of Judea were bounded on the north by Samaria, on the east by Moab, on the west by the Philistines, and on the south by Edom; the area included was little over 1000 square miles—one-sixth of Palestine as conquered by Joshua—and was thus scarcely larger than the county of Surrey. On the south the fortress of Bethsura was built by the Jews as a frontier castle, guarding the approach to the Holy City from Hebron and from the southern deserts; and Bethsura was only about twelve miles

from Jerusalem. On the north the main road from Samaria was protected by the town of Bethel, and the line which ascended from the plain of Capharsaba was blocked by the castle of Thamnatha, standing at the head of a rugged ravine some seventeen miles north-west of the capital. Bethhoron and Emmaus were also frontier towns, and on the east Jericho was the furthest inhabited place. Such were the limits of the little state which Judas had created ; they coincided almost exactly with those of the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem under its latest kings ; for the boundaries were natural, and the steep rampart of hills, which surrounds the narrow plateau on which Jerusalem stands, formed an efficient barrier against the incursions of the nomadic inhabitants of the plains, both in the days of Judas and in the times of Godfrey. Whenever the leaders of Israel went forth from their rocky fastnesses, it was to fight their way inch by inch, and, like the Christian expeditions against Moab or Ascalon, the wars of Judas, after the successful revolt of 165 B.C., were only rapid raids which had no permanent effect in increasing the amount of the Judean territory.

The capital of Judea was as small as the territory belonging to it. The Jerusalem of the Hasmoneans was not larger than is the modern town, and the walls built by Solomon probably enclosed the same area of about 200 acres.

Nor was the city one to be coveted as a natural capital to a great kingdom. Its position, shut in at the back of the Judean watershed, while affording it security, and thus making it the centre of the national faith, was at the same time unfavourable to communication with the rest of the world. In this natural isolation of the religious capital, we find, no doubt, one of the main causes for the preservation of the Jewish religion unaffected by the heathenism of the surrounding nations; but we also see in it the reason why Jerusalem has never been, nor is ever likely to become, a large city. The Jerusalem of Nehemiah or of the Hasmoneans was barely two and a-half miles round; and of its area, the Temple, with its courts, occupied a sixth part.

It may be interesting here to give a short sketch of the main features of the city, which we gather from the accounts in the book of Maccabees and from Josephus.

The site of Jerusalem is too well known to require lengthy description. It consists of the spurs which run out south-east from a flat watershed, and which are bounded by two valleys—one running southwards, the second, to the west of it, running at first parallel, then turning eastwards, and thus enclosing the site of the town in a rude parallelogram, which is defended by nature on all sides but the north-west.

The eastern valley is called Kedron in the Bible,

while the southern is the Ravine of Hinnom. Both valleys are deep and narrow, with precipices of ruddy rock in places, and at their junction they are about 500 feet below the tops of the hills they enclose.

The ground within the boundary valleys was further divided by a broad and flat-bottomed depression, afterwards called the Tyropœon, which divided the site in two. To the east was the long tongue of land which, running out of the watershed, formed the sloping ridge of Moriah, and terminated in the narrow spur of Ophel, enclosed between the Tyropœon on the west and the Kedron on the east.

On the west of the Tyropœon a second spur ran out to a narrow neck of high ground between the head of that valley and the top of the western boundary, or Valley of Hinnom. From this isthmus the ridge again swelled out into the high, broad hill almost isolated by the deep natural trenches which surrounded it, forming the strongest part of the town —the upper city.

A narrow ravine, which had its head north of the city, joined the Tyropœon just where it swept round southwards below Moriah. This ravine, afterwards filled up, bounded on the east the little knoll of rock which stood immediately north of the large hill of the upper city—a knoll higher than the crest of Moriah, but commanded by the mountain south of it. The head of the Tyropœon was so broad that it formed a

hollow theatre between the knoll of Millo and the upper city, and the houses which were built on the northern slope, and near the isthmus joining the upper city to the watershed, were arranged in a crescent-shape, and rose terrace above terrace opposite those on the southern hill.

The water-supply of the city was extremely deficient. The great reservoirs of the Temple enclosure were probably already in existence, but several of the pools now found (especially to the west) date much later than Jewish times. Jerusalem could boast of only one spring—on the east—and that was outside the walls of the town. In this deficiency of water-supply we find another great drawback, which prevents us from regarding Jerusalem as the natural capital of Palestine. Shechem, with its beautiful gardens and its abundant springs, being in a central position and easily accessible, is more likely than is Jerusalem to be in the future the political centre of the country.

The eastern ridge of Moriah was enclosed by the great fortress walls of Solomon, rising to a height of 150 feet of solid masonry; the stones of megalithic size, and ornamented with the broad draft distinctive of Phœnician work. The area within—partly rock, partly of earth banked up—was perhaps planted as it is now, and on the highest part of the ridge a platform was erected, ascended by steps, and surrounded

by little chambers, with doors leading to the lower level without. A second platform, rather lower, existed on the east. The first was the sacred Altar Court, only entered by the priests; the second was the place of worship for the whole of the congregation. In the Altar Court the rude pile of unhewn stones, whitewashed and cemented, was the principal object, and the impression conveyed by the very primitive character of the altar is, that the buildings of the Temple could not have been very magnificent in appearance, or solid in construction. The square block of masonry which is described as constituting the Holy House can hardly fail to have had a heavy appearance, and we have no authority for supposing that this was relieved by beautiful architectural details, or by any ornamentation other than the golden shields and crowns which were hung on its walls.

Beneath the western wall of the sanctuary, down in the valley, was the Xystus, or gymnasium, of which we have no description, but which was probably designed in imitation of a Greek building of the kind. North of the Temple was a scarped rock, rising some forty feet above the court, and on this stood the tower called Baris, which the Hasmoneans built as a protection to the Holy House, commanding the stronghold of the Greeks on Akra, or Millo. This tower was the predecessor of the famous citadel of Antonia, which so long baffled the Roman besiegers.

The only other prominent public building was the stronghold on Akra, just mentioned. From it the foreign mercenaries were able to look into the Temple area, and the height of the knoll on which it stood was considered so great a danger, that it was afterwards cut down, as will be seen later.

Such were the principal points in the view. The Temple fortress on a narrow ridge, with the heavy central building and the gleaming altar; to the north, the scarped rock of Baris; to the west, the knoll of Akra, with its tower. The houses rose tier above tier from the low ground towards the knoll, and the whole of the broad, flat, southern hill was built over, while the steep slopes to the east of it were probably covered also with houses.

The city wall curved round from Baris to the west, and included the Akra knoll. It was the old line by which Solomon and later kings had connected the upper city with the Temple area, and which Nehemiah had repaired. In the south-west corner of the upper city was a rocky scarp and outer trench. Thence the wall ran east above Siloam, and, crossing the Tyropœon, extended to Ophel—the quarter of the priests. Here, by the Watergate, was the curious rock-shaft down which the inhabitants of the city, in the time of siege, could descend unseen to the subterranean source of Gihon, the one spring of Jerusalem. From Gihon also the rock-cut aqueduct of Hezekiah was tunnelled

through the Ophel hill to the rock reservoir of Siloam.

Between the Watergate and the south-east corner of the Temple rampart, the foundation of the great wall of the city still remains. It is probably the work of Nehemiah, and its hasty construction is evidenced by the fact that it is not founded on rock, but merely on the soil above.

The general appearance of the city thus described cannot have been imposing. The ordinary dwellings were probably of stone, built in the same rude manner now common in the country. The Jewish ideas of symmetry seem always to have been very imperfect. Even the splendid Temple rampart is so irregularly built that its walls are not at right angles to one another, and the same defect is observable in the majority of native buildings of every age in Palestine.

The surrounding site was rocky and treeless, for the "mountains of Sion" no doubt presented at every historic period that aspect of sterility which originally caused them to receive the name Sion, or "sunny;" and the modern traveller who sees the city spread on the white chalk hills, under the full glare of the mid-day sun, can well appreciate the appropriateness of the old Hebrew title.

But if the capital of Judea could not compare with Athens or with Rome, it must be remembered that its architecture was expressive of a much more primitive

condition of civilisation. We are dealing with a people who were still content with a patriarchal government, and with a pastoral and agricultural life; who were almost entirely uneducated, and who had neither sciences nor arts. We cannot draw a true parallel between Judas Maccabæus and any of the great heroes of heathenism, any more than we can fairly compare ancient Jerusalem with any of the great capitals of the Old World. The history and results of the Hasmonean struggle are not, however, less interesting because connected with a less civilised condition of society; for the true appreciation of the influence of Jewish institutions on mankind is not impaired by forming a correct estimate of their archaic character.

A real parallel may be drawn between the Hasmoneans and the great native families of Palestine, which have now been almost entirely extinguished by Turkish persecution. Thus, for instance, in Galilee the great family of Zeidân gained power about the commencement of the 18th century; Dhahr el 'Amr, grandson of Zeidân, threw off the Egyptian yoke and refused to pay tribute. He became virtually King of Galilee. His eight sons were governors under him of eight districts, including Upper and Lower Galilee, with a total of 162 villages. The strongest positions were fortified with walls and round towers, and, as the country within these frontiers was at peace, mosques

and palaces, aqueducts and mills, were erected all over the land, which, for a quarter of a century, flourished under its native chiefs, until, at the age of ninety, the national hero was cruelly executed by Jezzar Pacha.

The history of the Hasmoneans was very much the same. Gaining power over a weak foreign government, they threw off the yoke and refused to pay tribute. Strengthening their borders with frontier fortresses, they obtained interior peace and tranquillity, and the Temple and walls of Jerusalem were raised again. But, like the Zeidaniyîn, the Hasmoneans were destined to final overthrow; their hero was slain, and their family was gradually exterminated by foreign rulers.

The year of which we are now speaking was, however, a time of constant success for Judas Maccabæus. In the spring of 164 B.C. he made four long and successful expeditions, and in the same year the great enemy of the Jews, Antiochus, "the frantic," died. The history of these events may now be resumed in order.

The first expedition made by Judas beyond the bounds of Judea was towards the South. The great wave of nomadic invasion, which was always surging against the high hills held by the Jews, could only be restrained and forced back in times of peace, when the mountaineers were strong and prosperous. So far had the southern Arabs advanced, that Bethsura

was now the limit of Idumea, and the Hebron hills were no longer reckoned as belonging to Israel. The "sons of Bean," who were descendants of Esau, had harassed the border villages during the period of anarchy, which dated from the accession of the impolitic Antiochus Epiphanes. Against these brigands Judas waged war, and succeeded in driving them back even to the southern limit of the territory given to the tribe of Judah by Joshua.

Boldly marching down along the watershed, and over the downs where David had wandered round Ziph and Carmel when hiding from Saul, Judas and his army entered the great chalky desert which runs out eastwards from Beersheba to the desolate precipices above the Dead Sea.

The land descends in sudden steps southwards towards Sinai and Petra; and at the south end of the Dead Sea, above the dreary salt marsh and the steep salt mountain, the rugged pass of Akrabbim leads up to the highest plateau, fifty miles from Jerusalem. Akrabbim, "the scorpion pass," was on the old boundary of Judah, and it was here that the sons of Esau had gathered a host. The troglodític Horites from the caverns of Petra, the sons of Bean from the flint castles in the deserts of Rehoboth, and all the nomadic ancestors of the modern Arabs, had collected together for their summer incursion into the cornfields and vineyards of the hill country.

Judas fell upon them suddenly, and defeated them, driving them back to the fastnesses of Mount Hor, and shutting them up in the desert fortresses. His expedition may be compared with that so adventurously carried out by Baldwin the First, brother of Godfrey, who, descending by almost the same route, in the early part of his reign, passed the salt mountain and fought his way to Petra and Mount Hor. But, like the later expedition, that of Judas was merely a raid, and the defeat of the Idumeans was only sufficient to give temporary security to the outlying villages south of the fortress of Bethsura, which was the real limit of the Jewish kingdom.

It is not clear from the existing accounts whether Judas crossed the valley south of the Dead Sea and passed over to the east side, or whether his attack on the children of Ammon was made from the plains of Jericho; but the second appears to have been the most likely, because the less difficult operation. Whichever route he chose, he next entered the highlands north of Heshbon, and penetrated to the edge of the great oak forest of Mount Gilead. Here he encountered the Ammonites under their chief, Timotheus, and defeated them in many battles, or skirmishes; finally, he attacked and overthrew the town of Jazer, standing on the border ravine of the old territory of Gad, forty miles from Jerusalem, whither Judas returned in triumph afterwards.

The power of the Greeks in Syria was now virtually at an end for the time being, and the anarchy resulting from the misgovernment and disasters of Antiochus had unsettled all the wild lands surrounding Judea. Thus, no sooner had Judas retired to Jerusalem, than tidings of troubles came to him simultaneously from the east, the north, and the west. The Jews of Mount Gilead were flying to the fortress of Dathema, or Dametha: the Galilean Jews were invaded by the Phœnicians, and by the foreign inhabitants of Accho, Tyre, and Galilee; while the troubles which, from time immemorial, had afflicted the border-lands between Israel and the Philistines, also demanded attention.

Judas decided to undertake the most difficult expedition himself, and, accompanied by Jonathan, his youngest brother, he marched towards Mount Gilead with 8000 men, while Simon, his elder brother, was sent towards Galilee with 3000. At Jerusalem two chiefs were appointed, named Joseph ben Zacharias and Azarias, who were strictly enjoined by Judas, and by the council which was held to determine what should be done to help the unfortunate Jews beyond Jordan, to remain on the defensive, and to attempt no expedition with the weak reserve left in Judea; for the whole of the army which had won the victory of Bethsura was now to be employed in the two expeditions undertaken.

It was no trifling enterprise on which Judas embarked. To carry his army over the scorching plains of Jericho, descending 4000 feet from Jerusalem by a rugged mountain-path ; to ford the rapid stream of Jordan ; to climb the stony mountains of Gilead—rising yet higher east of the Jordan valley—were laborious tasks ; but even after the river was passed, and the plateau above the passes reached, yet greater difficulties had to be faced. Judas had to lead his men forward through a hostile and unknown land, providing them with food as best he could, and discovering the rare springs along his line of advance. No regular base existed for his flying column, and no stores were carried forward to the front. It is surprising to read how far he penetrated into the interior of the eastern desert, and over how large an area his conquests in one short campaign extended.

A bloody vengeance had been taken by the Ammonites and Amorites on the Jews inhabiting their country, in retaliation for the defeat which Judas had so recently inflicted on them near Jazer. A thousand Israelites in the land of Tob had been put to death ; their wives and children were captives ; and Dametha was besieged by the same Timotheus whom Judas had defeated.

The advance of the relieving force was directed towards the broad plains of Bashan, which had been entirely overrun by the foreigners : cities inhabited by

the Jews, even as far as the famous Ashtoreth Carnaim, east of the sea of Galilee, were either already taken or in danger. Bozrah was besieged, as well as Alema, Bosor, Casphor, and Maked, strong places, the very names of which have now perished.

Our difficulties in correctly following out the campaign are greatly increased by the imperfect information which we possess as to the position of the various places mentioned. West of Jordan the topography is clear enough; but the maps of the country to the east are mere sketches, and have been made in hasty journeys by travellers ignorant, as a rule, of the Bedawi language. Nor can we hope to recover the ancient names as completely as in Western Palestine—even if the country be at some future period more perfectly explored—because the eastern Arabs do not preserve the old Hebrew titles with the tenacity of the peasantry west of Jordan. We must be content, therefore, with tracing the outline merely of Judas' adventurous wanderings.

The Jewish army crossed Jordan, and marched for three days into the wilderness—a distance of probably not less than seventy miles from Jerusalem. They then encountered a friendly tribe of Nabatheans, from whom they learned the peril of the Jews in Bozrah, and Judas determined to advance to the relief of this town, which stands on the high road to Euphrates, sixty miles east of Jordan, at the point where the

eastern highway is crossed by the road which runs south from Damascus to Heshbon and Moab. This famous city Judas actually reached by a forced march of 100 miles from Jerusalem, and, imitating the example of Joshua, he killed all the males and burnt the town. This feat may be compared with the adventurous expedition in which young Baldwin the Third won his spurs, before he became King of Jerusalem, when he advanced almost in the steps of Judas as far as Bozrah.

From Bozrah it appears to have been a night's march to Dametha, the last stronghold of the Jews; and as Judas' subsequent march led him northwards, it is not impossible that the place intended is the present Dâmeh, in the middle of the dreary Lejja district, near the oak forests and extinct volcanoes which exist some thirty miles north of Bozrah. This district has, in late times, proved a refuge for the Druses when revolting from the Turks, and the inaccessibility of the position must always have made it a strong place.

On this subject it is not, however, possible to speak with any certainty; and the position of the Mizpeh immediately afterwards taken, as well as of Casphor, Maked, Bosor, and Malle, which all fell before Judas, is also unknown. They appear to have been situated very far east, but Malle and Casphor are placed by Josephus in Mount Gilead.

Timotheus, the Ammonite, was besieging Dametha, and in the early morning the Jewish force arrived, and saw the host of the heathen advancing against the walls with battering-rams and ladders. The trumpets of the relieving force sounded, and the astonished Ammonites found themselves hemmed in between Judas and the garrison of Dametha just at the moment when victory seemed certain, and when, no doubt, they supposed the army of Maccabæus to be resting in Jerusalem after the late campaign in Moab: such was the masterly generalship of Judas, who, by some five days' forced marching, had reached the beleaguered town just in time to save it.

Timotheus and his army fled before the three companies, which charged with the sound of the trumpet, and which "cried with prayer." Eight thousand Ammonites were slain, and the surrounding district was subjugated. Thus Judas had successfully imitated and even surpassed the prowess of Saul in his expedition to the relief of Jabesh Gilead, when besieged by the Ammonite Nahash.

Encouraged by success, Judas determined to pursue his enemy Timotheus yet further north, and he advanced against the host which was gathered round the city of Raphana, afterwards famous as belonging to the Decapolis, but the site of which is, unfortunately, unknown. The hordes of the Eastern Arabs had been induced, by the hope of plundering the

Jews settled in the cities of Bashan, to join the Ammonites, and the immense host was drawn up behind a torrent-bed, or gorge, which formed a natural rampart. This line the heathen endeavoured to defend, hoping to overawe Judas by their formidable numbers, and by the strength of their position. When the valley had been forced by the Jewish army, rendered confident by the uninterrupted success of three years of continual fighting, the last hopes of Timotheus were destroyed. He fled still further northwards to Ashtoreth Carnaim, and sought refuge in the famous temple of the two-horned Queen of Heaven. The whole army of Judas hurried on in pursuit; for the scribes, or subordinate officers, whose duty it was to arrange the proportions of combatants and non-combatants in the Jewish army (Deut. xx.), had received orders from Judas that not a man was to remain in camp.

The first attack being thus promptly followed up, Ashtoreth Carnaim was taken without a siege, and Timotheus appears to have perished in the flames of the idol temple.

It cannot be doubted that Judas displayed, during this great campaign, a very high degree of military talent. It is true that he had not to contend with trained soldiers such as the generals of Antiochus could bring against him; but the art of successfully conducting a long advance through a country infested

by bands of guerillas has always held a high position in military science. Ashtoreth Carnaim was 150 miles from Jerusalem, and the distance alone made the campaign arduous. The rapidity of the marches, the fearlessness of the attacks, and the sudden overthrow of the cities, take us back to the first days of the invasion of Palestine by Joshua, when the enthusiasm and zeal of the fierce Israelite hosts had not been damped by defeat nor cooled by time.

Judas, however, knew well that no permanent results could be expected from his brilliant raid, and that a terrible vengeance would be wreaked on his fellow-countrymen, if left in Bashan, after his return. Warned by the tragedy of the land of Tob, the eastern Jews prepared for a general emigration, and, guarded by the Hasmonean army, they set out, with their wives, children, and household possessions, to go to Judea.

The route lay south-west, towards Jordan, over the plateau of Golan, and was not free from danger. On the road stood the fortress of Ephron, past which they were obliged to march. The inhabitants closed the gates, and barricaded them with stones, refusing admission, and turning a deaf ear to the peaceable demands of Judas that his host should be allowed to pass through the city on foot. No doubt the scarcity of water was the main reason why another route was

not taken, for it seems curious that a single town should bar the entire line of retreat.

The churlish townsmen, however, trusted in vain to the strength of their walls. The host halted, and the baggage was laid down ; the fighting men advanced, and, after assaulting the city for a whole day, the Jews took it and put its inhabitants to the sword. Over the dead bodies of the enemy they marched straight through the city, and, descending by the deep white gorge of the Hieromax river, past black precipices which hem in Jordan, they reached the bank of the river in the part where, north of Bethshean, it flows through a broad flat plain—a rapid but tortuous stream. Here, by the great ford of Abârah, or by some of the numerous passages, rather lower down, by which the Sukr Arabs now yearly cross the Jordan, the mixed host gained the western banks, and thence, as soon as the rear-guard and the stragglers had been collected, they marched down the great valley and ascended to the hills of Jerusalem with songs and rejoicings. Arriving at the Holy City, they offered sacrifices in token of their gratitude for deliverance from the heathen, and for their safe journey to Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, Simon, with his 3000 men, had been scarcely less successful in Galilee than Judas had been in Gilead and Bashan. The Phœnicians from Tyre, Sidon, and Accho—or, as it was then called,

Ptolemais—had been repulsed, the captive Jews had been released, and the invaders were in turn shut up in the maritime towns, while 3000 of the enemy are said to have been slain.

A second emigration also took place from Galilee, where the Jews appear to have had no more secure a footing than in Peræa. The security of the little Judean kingdom, guarded by its frontier fortresses and ruled by the strong hand of the heroic Judas, offered an inducement to all the scattered Israelites to flock round Jerusalem. Thus from Galilee and Arbattis a host accompanied Simon on his return southwards. The latter district is not known with certainty; but it is possible that under the name of Arbattis was included the territory of Issachar and the great plain of Esdraelon, above which, on the south-east, stood the old city of Rabbith, represented by the modern village of Râba, on the high saddle south of Gilboa.

Fortune favoured the Hasmonean brothers not only in the field, but, during their absence, in Jerusalem. Azarias and Joseph ben Zacharias had been ordered to remain quietly at home, but their ambition suggested to them the idea of supplanting the absent heroes in the popular favour by brilliant victories won nearer home. "Let us also get us a name," they said, "and go fight against the heathen that are round about us." In an evil moment, they rashly undertook

an enterprise which Judas would have shunned. In his conflicts with the trained soldiery of the Greek generals, he had always relied on strong defensive positions, and had never ventured to oppose them in the open ground.

The new leaders were destitute of the military genius and cautiousness of Judas, and advanced boldly against Gorgias, the general defeated at Emmaus, who was now entrenched in Jamnia, a town standing in a naturally strong position on a round hill almost isolated, which rises above the valley of Sorek, just where the yellow sand-dunes begin to encroach on the broad corn-lands of Philistia.

Gorgias sallied out from this stronghold, and swept down the hill on the Jewish force in the low ground. A rout resulted, and 2000 Israelites were slain, the remainder being pursued across the plain into the hills of Judea.

This defeat was, for Judas, perhaps the most fortunate circumstance in his career. The expedition had been undertaken in direct contradiction to his prudent counsel; and the success with which he had opposed the Greeks, acting on the defensive, at the mountain passes, when contrasted with the defeat in a rash attempt to meet them on equal terms, showed how well he understood the true tactics for a Jewish army. At the same time he was returning in triumph from a long offensive campaign, in which (as the historian

affirms) he had not lost a man. It was noted that the defeat at Jamnia was due to disobedience of his commands. "Moreover, these men (Azarias and Joseph) came not of the seed of those by whose hand deliverance was given to Israel." The power of the Hasmoneans was by this one incident consolidated for more than a century.

The energy of Judas would not suffer him to rest long. His forces were swelled by the Jews of Peræa and Galilee, and he once more took the field against the Idumeans, endeavouring to redeem the Hebron mountains and the rich Shephelah plains, which might now be so advantageously colonised by the emigrants collected at Jerusalem.

Hebron, the most ancient city of Judea, fell before this second Joshua, and its fortress walls were pulled down. Thus the rich vine country and the beautiful springs of that high district were conquered.

From Hebron the ever-victorious host descended to the rolling hills and fat corn valleys of the Shephelah, and attacked and took Mareshah, a city on the edge of the Philistine plain, which was reckoned as within the bounds of Idumea. By this conquest the district round Adullam was reclaimed—the rich valley of Elah and the olive groves of Beth-Gubrin, the old city of the Horites. It would seem, however, that the more adventurous spirits of the army were with difficulty restrained by their wary general; for certain

priests, venturing from the safety of the hills, were slain in the open country. But even in the plains the good fortune of Judas was the same. He did not indeed venture to attack Gorgias in Jamnia, but he reached Ashdod, lying south of it, and fifteen miles from the foot of the hills. In one rapid march he came down on the famous town which stands by the sand hills, in an open plain surrounded with palms. The temple of Dagon was levelled with the ground, the carved images of the fish-god were burnt, and the Jewish expedition had effected a retreat to the mountain fastnesses, before the Greek general, only nine miles away, could cut them off. The return march to Jerusalem was interrupted by the Sabbath, and the army rested for that day in the valley of Elah, at the famous stronghold of Adullam.

At this same time Antiochus Epiphanes died. His expedition against the temple of Nanæa in Elam had been unsuccessful; the inhabitants of the place defeated him, and the shrine of Artemis, with all its riches, escaped the fate of the Temple of Jehovah. The defeated tyrant retired to Babylon, and thence to Tabœ, in Persia. He was soon after afflicted with an incurable disease, and his latter days were embittered by the continual reports of Judean victories, and of the extension and consolidation of the Hasmonean power. He came to his end, and there was "none to help him." The heathen saw in his death the

vengeance of Diana, and the Jew attributed it to the Divine wrath of Jehovah, because of the many miseries which Antiochus had inflicted on the chosen race.

Judas had now attained the summit of his power. It is true that, while much had been done in those four years which had passed since Mattathias, his father, died, much remained to be done, but Judas was not himself destined to see his hopes completely realised. The independence of the Jews was an accomplished fact, but not yet recognised by the great rulers of the world, the kings of Egypt and Syria. The Hellenistic heresy was not yet rooted out, for the miserable Onias was still High Priest, while the Macedonian garrison still held the castle on Akra. No settled form of government had been established, for the Prophet divinely commissioned to dictate new ordinances had not appeared. The Samaritans were still flourishing, and the rival temple on Gerizim was, in the eyes of the heathen, not inferior to the Jerusalem sanctuary. Judas had never ventured to attack these enemies of his countrymen in the strong mountains which surround Shechem, and it was not until another thirty-five years had elapsed that this final triumph was attained by his nephew.

But though all this was still to be done, the amount achieved was not less important. Real freedom was attained, the temple service was re-established, the

law of Moses was observed, and the Jew could circumcise his children, and study the Torah as his conscience commanded, without fear of cruel persecution. Peace and security existed within the borders of Judea, and from this centre the future state was destined to grow steadily larger. The insolence of the Idumean nomads and of the Ammonites and Eastern Arabs had been repressed by the brilliant successes of the Hasmoneans in the south, north, east, and west.

A strong nucleus had been formed in the hills round Jerusalem by the gathering in of the scattered Israelites of Galilee and Peræa, and the vitality of the new kingdom and of the reformed religion was superabundant.

Finally, the power of Judas himself had, in this one year, been immensely increased. His military genius and good fortune, his prudence and wisdom, had been alike placed beyond dispute, while the purity of his motives and the soundness of his faith were generally recognised. He was, in fact, the darling of the people—the national hero in whose life the prosperity of Israel was bound up—the appointed instrument through whom deliverance was given by the Most High.

CHAPTER V.

DEFEATS AND DEATH OF JUDAS.

163–161 B.C.

IT is sad that the sequel to the history of the patriotic Maccabæus should be a story of misfortune and untimely death, and that the brilliant successes just described should have been followed by a series of defeats.

Antiochus Epiphanes being dead, Lysias, the actual guardian of the heir-apparent, and protector of the realm, proclaimed the boy Antiochus Eupator, who was only nine years of age; and in the spring of the year 163 B.C. he advanced with a force of 100,000 foot and 20,000 cavalry to the relief of the garrison in Jerusalem, which had succeeded in sending a messenger to report that they were closely invested by the Jews under the Hasmoneans.

It was a Sabbatic year, and offensive warfare and tillage were alike unlawful to the Jews. The Greek advance appears to have been very rapid, and Bethsura on the watershed had been already invested

before Judas, raising the siege of the Akra citadel, advanced to meet Lysias.

The position which he chose was one which again gave evidence of his military capacity. It was indeed the last natural line of defence south of Jerusalem, but it was one which could neither be outflanked nor masked, but which must be attacked and won before any advance could be made.

About nine miles south of the Holy City the watershed of the country becomes very narrow, and a high ridge, rising to more than 3000 feet above the sea, commands a good view on the north, east, and west. The main road from Hebron creeps along the eastern side of this mountain, and runs above a precipitous valley, being thus carried through a dangerous defile commanded by the hill. Immediately north of this pass is the open dell in which are the great reservoirs vulgarly called Solomon's Pools. Here also is the spring of Etam, where were Solomon's gardens, and whence, in later times, Pilate's great aqueduct brought water to the Temple. Under the brow of the high ridge above mentioned there are other clear springs, and the field of battle was thus well supplied with water on the side of the defence.

Looking down from the ridge towards the sea, a deep and narrow valley is seen sinking suddenly, the head formed by an intricate network of small ravines, which seam the sides of the great hill-spurs

running out westwards. Two other main roads, from the plains, pass beneath the brow of the mountain, on the west and north-west. The first, from Beth-Gubrin and Adullam, ascends to Gibeah of Judah, and thus to the ruins of Beth-Zacharias, which stand at the southern end of the high ridge. The second runs along the northern side of the valley of Elah, descending westwards, by the rock Etam, towards Shochoh and Beth-Shemesh. By either of these routes an enemy might have advanced on Jerusalem, and the position taken up by Judas commanded both, as well as the southern watershed road from Hebron, by which Lysias was actually advancing.

The sides of the mountain were steep and rugged; the top was barren, and gleamed with a cap of white chalky soil. On the west, a low belt of precipice ran along the ridge near the summit, but on the north, in rear, the ground was more open than in front.

From this mountain summit, now only known by the modern name of Râs Sherifeh, "the high hill-top," a view could be obtained embracing many a famous scene of Jewish history. On the north, the Holy City itself was visible, and Bethlehem, the home of David, standing among its olive groves and vineyards. On the west, the eye ranged over the dusky rolling ridges which stretch towards the Shephelah and the plains of Philistia. The rock of Samson's Etam, a

barren stony knoll, was a conspicuous feature, and the white cliff of Gath was dimly visible on the edge of the Philistine plain.

Turning eastwards, the valley of the other Etam, with rugged cliffs and terraces of rock, formed the foreground. The white peaks and sharp ridges of the desert round Tekoa were visible behind, and, furthest of all, the blue wall of the Moab mountains closed the view.

Such was the battle-field selected by Judas. But although he showed his usual skill in the choice of a defensive position, he had to contend with more formidable foes than any he had before encountered. Lysias seems to have appreciated the strength of his enemy, and to have spared nothing which could ensure success. His army was nearly twice as large as that defeated at Bethsura two years before, and a new and terrible feature was added in the thirty-two elephants which accompanied the forces.

Surprise is the essence of success in war. Whether it be the novel invention of a needle-gun, or the use of a sling, campaigns have been won again and again by the introduction of a new weapon or an unexpected method of attack. The Jews had withstood the Greek infantry; they had even found courage to oppose horsemen when fighting in a country unfit for cavalry; but the soldiers of Judas had probably never before seen an elephant.

The unwieldy animals had been brought up even to the hill-tops, and were marching along the rocky paths in single file. On the back of each was a wooden tower, whence the archers sent a continual shower of arrows, and a regiment of 1000 footmen with a squadron of 500 horse accompanied each elephant. The Jews saw with astonishment the docility of the beasts, governed each by a single negro, and a report spread that they had been rendered furious by the sight of "the blood of grapes and mulberries," in anticipation of the battle.

Bethsura had been closely invested, and the main body of the army advanced to assault the position at Beth-Zacharias. The elephants and their attendant forces marched by the main road, which lay down a flat open valley towards the narrow pass already noticed; but Lysias had taken the precaution of scouring the hills on either side of the road, well knowing that a sudden flank attack might be expected from a general of Judas' genius.

A glorious and formidable spectacle was presented by the great army, as it marched on. The sun shone on the brazen helmets, the mail coats, the shields of gold. The noise of the tread of the footmen, the rattling of the harness, the trumpeting of the elephants, and the shouts of the whole host were re-echoed by the surrounding hills, and struck terror into the hearts of the Jews. In vain did Judas encourage his men

to attack the vanguard. In vain did his heroic brother, Eleazar, sacrifice his life to show how easily the elephants might be defeated. Choosing out the leader, whose rich trappings suggested that some person of importance—perhaps the King Antiochus himself—might be concealed in the tower, Eleazar transfixed it with his weapon, and perished beneath the huge animal as it fell. He won for himself "a perpetual name;" but the Jewish army was discomfited, and Judas retired to Jerusalem, and prepared to stand a siege.

The Greeks, who, for five years, had failed to penetrate into the hills of Jerusalem, at length invested the capital. Bethsura fell almost immediately after the battle of Beth-Zacharias, its inhabitants having been unable, in consequence of the Sabbatic year, to re-provision the place. With a moderation which contrasts with the fierce intolerance of the Jews when victorious, Antiochus allowed the citizens of this fortress to depart uninjured, and afterwards established a strong garrison in the town.

And now the party of the "pious," and the four surviving Hasmonean brothers, were shut up in the Temple fortress, and the garrison of the Akra citadel besieged in turn their former besiegers, in concert with the great army which had relieved them. The sufferings of the Jews were increased by the fact that, as it was a Sabbatic year, no corn had been

sown which might now replenish their exhausted granaries.

Humanly speaking, the Jewish revolt was at an end, and the heroic leaders appeared doomed to certain death; but, by a coincidence truly dramatic, the situation suddenly changed with news which reached Lysias just at the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem.

Philip, the foster-brother of Antiochus Epiphanes, had been appointed guardian by the dying tyrant to the youthful heir, and was at this time returning from Persia to Antioch. Lysias had, however, no intention of giving up his power, and was therefore obliged to return at once to the Syrian capital, there to encounter the new protector. A peace was hastily patched up with the Jews, and the Greek military honour being satisfied by the victory of Beth-Zacharias, it was agreed that all idea of compelling the Jews to abandon their religion should be relinquished, and that they should only be required to pay the ordinary tribute, being in other respects left entirely free to obey their national laws.

The besieged were happy to escape so easily, remembering the cruelties of the fatal year 168 B.C. They marched out of the Temple stronghold, trusting to the promises of the King; but the latter, in defiance of his oath, caused the great rampart-walls to be broken down, and took away with him the High

Priest Onias, whom he regarded, no doubt, as one of the main instigators of the Jewish discontent, and whom he subsequently put to death at Aleppo. Returning to Antioch, Lysias found it in possession of Philip; he besieged the city, and killed his rival after it fell.

The campaign of 163 B.C. thus brought fortune, at once good and evil, to the Hasmoneans. Their reputation must have been seriously compromised by defeat, and we never hear again, in the lifetime of Judas, of those enthusiastic and confident hosts which he formerly commanded. It was evident that the Greeks were still able, by putting forth their strength, to crush any resistance that Jewish arms could offer, and the Hasmoneans found themselves compelled to rely on an alliance with another heathen nation, their own strength being insufficient to withstand that of the armies of the Seleucidæ.

But, at the same time, the last barrier to Hasmonean ambition had been removed. The family of Zadok had become extinct in Palestine, and the chosen deliverers of the nation had the first claim as members of the first order of priestly families to the office of the High Priesthood. During the life of Onias, they had made no attempt to usurp the position. Such scruples were now no longer necessary. It is not certain that Judas became High Priest, but it seems at least that he was so regarded by the party of the Chasidim. Josephus does not enumerate his name in

the list of the High Priests (Ant. xx. 10), but gives that of the High Priest nominated by Antiochus to succeed Onias instead. On the other hand, in relating the history of the revolt, he speaks of Judas as being High Priest for the last three years of his life, or from the time of the death of Onias.

Alcimus was the priest chosen by the Greeks to fill the office. He was a descendant of Aaron, but not of the family of whom Onias had been the last in Palestine. He also belonged to the party of the Hellenisers, and the hatred and suspicion with which the Chasidim regarded him seems to have exceeded that excited by Onias. He outlived Judas, and his death at Jerusalem, in 159 B.C., was supposed to be a judgment caused by his determination to pull down the wall of partition, in the Temple, which divided the heathen from the Jews, a bulwark characteristic of Jewish orthodoxy, and a work held sacred as having been executed in the time of the "prophets" Ezra and Nehemiah.

The original family of the High Priests traced back its descent through Jesus, son of Josadek, who came back with Ezra, to Zadok, the first appointed High Priest after the building of Solomon's Temple, and thus to Aaron himself. Only one representative of this house remained, another Onias, son of him who was murdered at Aleppo. He was at this time scarcely more than a child, and escaped to Egypt, where he

found refuge among the Mizraimites, to whose party he belonged.

The result of this revolution was of no little importance to the subsequent history of Judaism. Hitherto the party of unorthodox Jews living in Egypt had acknowledged the spiritual supremacy of the High Priest at Jerusalem; but now the only true High Priest became a resident in Egypt. Thus, while the party of the Chasidim at Jerusalem could reproach their Egyptian brethren with their return to the land of bondage in disobedience to the commands of Moses, the Mizraimites might now retort that the sanctuary at Jerusalem could no longer be considered the religious capital, since the head of the faith had quitted it, and since his office was usurped by a family not consecrated with the holy oil with which Aaron was christened.

Yet further, they quoted a passage from the Book of Isaiah—greatest and most revered of the Prophets—to prove that a Temple was to be built in Egypt, such as Onias built about the year 160 B.C.

"In that day there shall be an altar of the Lord in the land of Egypt"—so ran the prophecy. The name of the city Ir-ha-Heres, mentioned in the same passage, was by the Mizraimites rendered "city of the sun," and supposed to refer to Heliopolis, where Onias erected his Temple, while by the Jerusalem school the name was translated to mean "city of destruction."

A complete schism arose between the Egyptian and Palestinian Jews, and the religion of the former, freed from the restraints of strict orthodoxy, developed rapidly into a mystic and allegorical interpretation of the whole teaching of Moses.

The Temple established at Heliopolis remained standing until about 73 B.C., and though built in imitation of that at Jerusalem, it differed in several respects. It was situate about twenty miles from Memphis, and formed a kind of fortress. It was sixty cubits high, and built of large stones, but the outer walls were of brick, with stone gateways. A single lamp of beaten gold burned inside, instead of the seven-branched candlestick, and this change of symbol was no doubt connected with a modification of the original doctrines of Judaism.

Feasts peculiar to the Egyptians were also instituted, and the festival of the first fruits was observed with special customs, and known as the Feast of Baskets. Sacred dances, in which women participated, became part of the ceremonial, resembling the Feast of Maidens held yearly at Motza, which was possibly instituted by the Hellenists in Palestine.

A separate priesthood was established in Egypt, and thus, by the time of Philo, the Judaism of the Mizraimites presented a most marked contrast to the Judaism of Palestine, with the development of which we are more especially concerned.

In the year 162 B.C., Demetrius, the nephew of Antiochus Epiphanes, who had been sent as a hostage to Rome, but who was the rightful heir to the throne of the Seleucidæ, escaped from Italy and landed at Tripoli. One of those sudden revolutions characteristic of the East now occurred. Lysias and the boy-king Antiochus Eupator were seized and slain, and Demetrius sat on the throne of his father, Seleucus.

The party of the Hellenisers, headed by the High Priest Alcimus, came to the new king, and accused Judas of having driven them from their native land, and of being an enemy to the sovereignty of the Greeks. The King at once appointed Bacchides, one of his most trusted generals, to accompany Alcimus to Jerusalem, there to install him, and to collect the tribute.

The new governor entered Judea with peaceful protestations, but Judas was too wary to trust himself in the power of the Hellenists. Many of the Chasidim, however, were less cautious. "For," said they, "one that is a priest of the seed of Aaron is come with this army, and he will do us no wrong."

Trusting to the oaths and promises of Bacchides, some of the pious went out to meet him; but, according to the Jewish historian, those oaths were quickly broken, and no less than sixty of the Chasidim, probably leaders of the party, were executed.

After establishing Alcimus in Jerusalem, Bacchides left the city, and fixed his camp at a place called Bezeth, or Beth-Zetho. The position of this village, as Josephus calls it, is not known with certainty, but the most probable suggestion is perhaps that it was the same as Bezetha, afterwards part of Jerusalem—a position well fitted for the Greek camp intended to overawe the city.

From Jerusalem, the bands of foreign soldiers and the Hellenists, under Alcimus, went out to hunt down Judas and the Chasidim, who in turn revenged themselves on the party now in power whenever an opportunity occurred. Thus the land was desolated once more, not by foreign persecution, as in 168 B.C., but by internal dissension and civil war. It appears that Judas and his party were the more successful, for Alcimus again went to Antioch, and a new general, named Nicanor, was sent to Judea, with yet stricter orders to suppress the seditious party of the Chasidim.

Nicanor reached Jerusalem, and, like Bacchides, endeavoured to entice Judas into his power. They even arranged a meeting, but it became known to the Jewish patriot that his death was meditated, and he consequently kept at a safe distance, his prudence being as remarkable as his courage. Frustrated in his attempts to destroy Judas by treachery, Nicanor endeavoured to take him by force. A fight ensued at the village of Caphar Salama, a place near the borders

of Samaria, and not improbably the modern Selemeh, in the plains below Modin ; but in this assault Nicanor was defeated, and forced to retire on the citadel in Jerusalem.

Nicanor returned to vent his rage on the unhappy inhabitants of the Holy City. The priests came to meet him, and showed him the sacrifices daily offered for King Demetrius ; but the baffled general treated their advances with scorn, and swore that if he could not defeat Judas, he would revenge himself by burning the Temple. Even the Hellenists had cause to repent their alliance with a heathen of so violent a character. The weeping priests stood before the altar, and besought the Divine mercy.

"Be avenged," they cried, "O Lord, of this man and his host, and let them fall by the sword ; remember their blasphemies, and suffer them not to continue any longer."

Thus, with the curses of the whole nation on his head, Nicanor marched out to seek Judas, and to join a new army which was advancing to meet him near Bethhoron.

Once more Judas Maccabæus appears on the scene as the saviour of his distracted country. While the two armies marched to concentrate near his native town of Modin, he appeared suddenly in rear of Nicanor, and established himself in a strong position, guarding the northern approach to Jerusalem. The

new battle-field chosen by the indomitable hero was close to the little village of Adasa, situate on the Judean watershed, four miles north of Jerusalem, at the point where the ancient high-road bifurcates, the one branch passing northwards, along a shallow depression, under the white hill on which stands Ramah of Benjamin, the other crossing the flat open valley, which in summer is covered with corn, and rising towards a crumbling ruin on a bare shapeless down, and thence running, north of Gibeon, to Bethhoron.

Here it is that the ploughman still points out the dusty heap which represents the site of an old town, and which is called "the ruin of Adasa." If interrogated, he will tell the legend of a great battle once fought here, from which the open valley has obtained the title "Valley of Blood."

The scenery round Adasa is some of the most dreary in Palestine. The flat valley head runs up close to the watershed, the ground is treeless and barren, the rock, when visible, being a white soft chalk, and the ploughland a deep-red loam. The surrounding downs have the usual tame outline of the chalk in Palestine, and hide from sight the more picturesque mountains of Samaria to the north ; while the hill of Adasa shuts out the view of Gibeon, standing on its isolated hill in the plain of Helkath Hazzurim. About a mile to the south of Adasa was Mizpeh, on

the flat ridge behind which Jerusalem lies concealed, and the conical summit of that mysterious mountain now named Neby Samwîl breaks the hill-line on the south-west. It is an uninviting and bleak plateau, which the traveller crosses hastily as he approaches the Holy City; but the position, astride the two main roads, in open ground, was one not easily outflanked, and it was selected with the usual military instinct which always distinguished Judas' choice of vantage ground.

At Adasa, Judas collected 1000 men, and lay in ambush awaiting Nicanor.

In later times, the story ran that a vision presented itself to him in the darkness, and that he encouraged his men in the morning by relating it to them. He seemed to see Onias the First, the famous brother of Simon the Just, who had been dead for a century and a-half, holding up his hands in intercession for the nation, like Moses at Rephidim. The appearance of an aged man of majestic mien, with white hair, was next seen by the dreamer, holding in his right hand a sword of gold. The voice of Onias proclaimed that this was Jeremiah the prophet, and the vision addressed Judas with the comforting assurance, "Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with the which thou shalt wound the adversaries."

The sober historian who compiled the first Book of Maccabees does not, however, mention this vision.

His narrative throughout is remarkable for the absence of the supernatural element, which forms so important a feature in the later unhistoric accounts of the deeds of Judas. In the authentic accounts also the Greek army is stated to have numbered 9000 men, while in the second Book of Maccabees the number of the slain alone in the battle of Adasa is computed at 35,000; such are the fabulous additions which have gradually gathered round the veritable story of many an episode of Jewish history.

On the barren wolds of Adasa, Judas and his men bivouacked in the cold on the night of the 12th of Adar (the beginning of March). The next day was the anniversary of the fast kept by Esther, when all her people lay under sentence of death, and when the religion of Israel seemed doomed, as on the eve of the battle of Adasa, to sudden extinction.

The morning came, and the Greek army advanced, probably quite unaware of the ambush laid for them; for the army of Judas might, from the nature of the ground, have been easily concealed until the enemy was close at hand. In spite of the great preponderance of numbers, the foreign forces were routed at the first onslaught, and Nicanor fell, fighting courageously. The soldiers of Judas pursued the enemy to the sound of the trumpet, and the townsmen and villagers rose throughout the hill district, as the heathen were driven, for yet a third time in history,

down the valley of Ajalon, and fled to the fortress of Gezer, which appears to have been in the hands of the Greeks.

The head and right arm of Nicanor were cut off and carried to Jerusalem. Thus, while the inhabitants of the Holy City had observed the fast of Esther with fear and anxiety, dreading the fate which might befall the Holy House if Nicanor should return victorious, and carry out his threat of burning the Temple, they had now additional cause to celebrate with joy and thanksgiving the great feast of Purim, commemorating the deliverance by Esther. On that day, the 14th of Adar, palm branches were borne as at the great feasts of Tabernacles and Lights. Wine was drunk (and it is clear from the Talmud that by wine the Jews did *not* understand the unfermented juice of the grape), and ever after, the day was remembered as the anniversary of two great deliverances—the repeal of the harsh sentence of Ahasuerus, and the saving of the Temple from its threatened destruction by Nicanor.

The head of the defeated general, and his hand, which he had raised with a blasphemous oath against the Holy House, were brought to Jerusalem, and hanged up opposite the Temple. Thus for a while the patriotic party triumphed, but the victory of Adasa is the last bright gleam in the story of Judas' life.

The experiences of the last two years seem to have

produced a sad conviction in the minds of Judas and his followers that deliverance was not to be expected without human aid. The first flush of excitement which followed the successes of the three battles at the passes, and of the trans-Jordanic campaign, had died away. The Greeks had put forth their strength, and had razed the Temple walls to the ground. It was evident that another invasion would soon follow, when the news of Nicanor's defeat and death should have reached Antioch, and Judas cast about him for an ally to assist him against Demetrius.

The power of the Romans had been already shown in Asia Minor at an earlier period. Antiochus the Great, the father of Epiphanes and the protector of Hannibal, had been defeated by them at Magnesia, and forced to send his son as a hostage to Italy. The history of Roman conquests in Europe and in Africa had also come to the ears of Judas. The Republic was resting, and recovering its strength, after the long struggle of sixty-four years with Carthage, which was now humbled, though not as yet destroyed.

In Greece also, after four years of hard fighting, Perseus, son of Philip the Fifth, the last King of Macedon, had been defeated at Pydna by Æmilius Paullus, and had been slain in the same year in which the revolt had commenced at Modin. Spain had been completely mastered by the elder Scipio about forty years before. And the advantages obtained by

Roman friendship were shown in the case of Eumenes, King of Pergamus, who obtained from the Senate the government of Lydia, Mysia, and the Thracian Chersonese, which had been recovered from Antiochus, and were now bestowed on the Roman ally who had assisted in his defeat.

To Rome, therefore, Judas now turned for assistance. The Romans were favourably disposed towards any enemy of Demetrius Soter, and Jewish courage and aptitude for war stood in high repute among the heathen ever since the time of Alexander the Great. Motives of policy also may have induced the Senate to look favourably on an alliance with the Jews, who were a Semitic people, speaking a language akin to that of the Carthaginians, and who might perhaps be won over to the side of the hereditary enemy unless their adhesion to Rome were secured. Thus a defensive and offensive alliance presented advantages not only to the Jews, but also to the Romans themselves.

The conclusion of such an alliance speaks well for the political prudence of Judas. It becomes evident that he was no mere fanatic, who, hoping against hope, expected by the righteousness of his cause to prevail against the immeasurably greater power of the civilised heathen. He saw that times had changed since the ancient days of the conquest of Palestine by Joshua, and that Israel could no longer hope to

extirpate the heathen, but stood rather in danger of being annihilated by them.

Thus, while his zeal for freedom and for purity of religion among his fellow-countrymen was unabated, his prudence suggested to them an alliance with a powerful and enlightened western nation, conspicuous in the heathen world for the toleration which they had shown towards the various religions of the many nations which they had subjugated, no less than for their honourable adherence to treaties, and for the vigorous support which they afforded their friends.

At the same time, the foresight of Judas was not sufficient to enable him to predict the disastrous consequences of thus calling on one heathen nation to assist Israel against another. No one could have anticipated that, by their own degeneracy, the Hasmoneans were destined to disappoint the fond hopes of the nation, or that, by their turbulence and the virulence of their internal dissensions, the Jews were to place themselves at the mercy of Rome. The alliance seemed at the time to promise nothing but good, and to afford a protection to the infant state re-created by Judas, which should give free scope to its powers of growth at a critical period of its existence.

Thus, immediately after the battle of Adasa, Eupolemus and Jason were sent as ambassadors to Rome; and although Judas did not live to see their

return, a treaty was concluded which specially bound the Romans to defend the Jews as friends and allies against their common enemy, Demetrius Soter. But the journey to Italy was a long one, and before the ambassadors could return, Bacchides had once more been despatched to Judea with Alcimus. In the spring of 161 B.C., he marched down through Galilee, and, according to Josephus, attacked the caves of Arbela, above the Sea of Galilee, where many Jews had found refuge. About the time of the Passover, he reached Jerusalem with a large force.

Judas seems to have been surprised, and was either unable to collect a sufficient force at so short a notice, or found it impossible to instil once more into his countrymen any portion of his own heroic courage. Still he had thrice the number with him that he had commanded at Adasa. It appears that he was at the time in Modin, and he collected his forces at a place called Eleasa, which is no doubt the present *Il'asa*, near the nether Bethhoron. He determined to repeat the strategy which had proved successful at Adasa, and marched eastwards towards the narrow and difficult pass, north of Gophna, through which the Greek army under Bacchides had just advanced from Samaria.

The advantage of surprise was not, however, gained in his last fatal campaign. Bacchides was apparently aware of the force advancing against his line of com-

munication, a route by which none of his predecessors had ventured to enter Judea: he, therefore, immediately retreated northwards towards the pass, and encamped with 20,000 foot and 2000 horse at Beeroth of Benjamin, south of Bethel.

The country which thus became the theatre of war is perhaps the most rugged in Palestine. The narrow road runs along the watershed, and on the north-west, the traveller, after passing Bethel, looks down on a deep stony valley, beyond which rise rugged mountains crowned by villages which stand out like fortresses along the sky-line. The steep hillsides have been laboriously stepped with terraces, on which the bright green foliage of the fig presents a vivid contrast to the ruddy colour of the rocks, while in parts the trailing vines hang down over the rude retaining walls, forming a long curtain of apple-green foliage. The district is well watered, and full of traces of ancient habitation and cultivation. To the north is the pass in which the small spring now called "the robber's fountain" drips out beneath a precipice; and, to the east of this, a perfectly bare and dark-grey rocky mountain rises to a greater height than any other point in Palestine south of Upper Galilee. This mountain is the ancient Baal Hazor, where Absalom had sheep-shearers, and from its summit, in clear weather, the snowy dome of Hermon is seen above the chain of Ebal.

The great boundary valley which now separated the hosts was at one time the border of the kingdom of Israel; for Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephron were frontier towns, taken by Abijah from Jeroboam; and of the two latter, Ephron was beneath the brow of Baal Hazor, and the other, Jeshanah, stood on the brink of the valley, at the present 'Ain Sinia, near Gophna.

Judas and his men had reached the northern brink of the great valley at Berzetho (the present *Bîr ez Zeit*), ten miles north-east of Eleasa, and only about three miles from the pass. His endeavour seems to have been to gain the heights above the main road, for it is specially noted that he directed his main attack on the eastern or right flank of Bacchides' army.

It was no longer an enthusiastic and confident host that he led. The Jews were dismayed at the inferiority of their numbers, and when the morning of the battle came, Judas found that, out of 3000 men, all but 800 had deserted him. Those who remained endeavoured to dissuade him from fighting; but the Greeks were already in motion to attack the strong position which he held, and the hope which had sustained him at Bethhoron and Emmaus, at Bethsura and at Adasa, was still strong in his heart. Nevertheless, there was a sort of presentiment in his words, "If our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren, and let us not stain our honour."

The Greek army was divided into two wings, with cavalry on either flank (though the ground was ill adapted for the use of this arm), and with light infantry, archers, and slingers in front. Bacchides himself commanded the right wing, which protected the line of his communications.

With all the old impetuosity of attack which had characterised his successful battles, Judas broke in on the right wing and drove it to the mountains; but the numbers he led were too few; the pursuit was too rash; the left wing of the Greek army attacked the pursuers in rear, and, thus shut in between two enemies, the little band of Judas was surrounded and annihilated.

"Judas also was killed, and the remnant fled."

So, like the English Harold at Hastings, the hero died at bay, fighting to the last. His body was afterwards recovered by his brethren and carried to Modin, where he was laid beside his father, and where a great lamentation was made over him.

Thus perished the best, the bravest, and the most famous of the five Hasmonean brothers. From the stony knoll where he lay buried, his countrymen could point on every side to scenes of victory—eastward, to the slopes of Bethhoron, the scene of his first resolute defence of the entrance into Judea; southwards, to Emmaus, the scene of his famous night attack; westward, to Caphar Salama, where he had

defeated Nicanor; but the disastrous fields of Beth-Zacharias and of Berzetho were not in sight.

So also, as we review the history of the hero, his defeats seem to fade from our notice, when we remember the brilliant victories he won, and the substantial benefits he bestowed on his country.

From the story of his actions, we have been able to form some kind of idea of the character of the man. We know that he was strong and brave, and we may believe that he was beautiful, for he came of a family conspicuous for personal beauty. We have seen that he possessed a simple and constant faith in the Divine power to give the victory to those who were not strong, and the race to those who were not swift; that he maintained the primitive purity of the Hebrew religion, untainted by any of those latitudinarian tendencies which debased the more spiritual worship of the Jew by the admixture of the grosser and more material conceptions of the heathen. At the same time, we have seen that Judas was not a mere fanatic; that he knew the advantages which civilisation and organisation gave to his foes; and that he felt the necessity of obtaining allies to assist his countrymen in their struggle for freedom.

That Judas possessed military genius we can hardly doubt, when we consider how well he understood the advantages which might be obtained by a careful choice of position, by sudden surprise, by well-sustained

and rapid pursuit, and by falling on the flank and rear of the enemy. That he was energetic, determined, enduring, and cautious, we gather from the story of each of his campaigns and battles.

Nor was his wisdom as a ruler and politician less remarkable. He found his countrymen spiritless and scattered. He not only taught them the value of their mountain fastnesses, and the tactics which gave them advantage over trained troops, but, what was more, he founded a state forming a nucleus round which the scattered Israelites of Peræa and Galilee gathered rapidly, and which gradually extended its borders to include all Southern Palestine.

But perhaps the most important act in Judas' career was the conclusion of a treaty with Rome. His foresight provided a protection for Jewish freedom and faith which probably saved them from utter extinction; yet, at the same time, the alliance which, in the next thirty years, made Judea an independent kingdom, proved, in another century, the cause of the final destruction of the Holy City and of the Temple; so little can man foresee the results of his most carefully considered actions.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SURVIVING BROTHERS.

161–114 B.C.

THE hero died, and the nation mourned him; but his work was done, and the long-lost freedom of Israel was once more regained. Jewish nationality had revived, and had become consolidated, purged from the Hellenising element, and freed from foreign tyranny. A period of trouble did indeed follow the defeat and death of Judas, but there was no longer any danger of the extinction of Judaism as a religion, or of the loss of Hebrew nationality.

Judas had sown the seed, and had fostered the tender plant, but he was taken away without seeing the fair fruit which ripened later. His personal history is comprised in the brief story of eight years of struggle and war which has been narrated in the last three chapters; but the tale is incomplete without a glance at the history of the next half-century, during which the prosperity of the Jews rapidly increased and reached its acme.

The fatal year 161 B.C. was the first of seven during which the foreign persecution raged throughout Judea. The Hellenists, protected by Bacchides, regained their former ascendency; and the Chasidim, with the Hasmonean family, were obliged to fly to the desert. The wars of the preceding years had prevented the tilling of the land, and a famine now resulted, so that the very ground (as the historian says) appeared to rebel against the unfortunate Jews.

The main object of Bacchides appears to have been to exterminate the Hasmonean family. The cause of freedom was now so entirely identified with the name of the sons of Mattathias, that the Greek general's efforts were directed rather towards the persecution of the heroic house which had delivered Israel than to a general persecution of the race and religion.

On the death of Judas, his youngest brother, Jonathan, who had gained the nickname of Apphus, or "the wary," was chosen High Priest and leader. It is curious that Simon and Johanan, both older than either Jonathan or even Judas, do not appear to have taken the lead even after the death of him who was considered the boldest and most skilled in war. The character of Jonathan is the least admirable of all the five. His history is one of constant intrigue, and his successes were due to craft and duplicity rather than to valour and wisdom.

Yet for eighteen years he led the nation, and

it was only after his death that the wise Simon assumed the position of leader, when he was already advanced in age, and the only survivor of the five famous brothers. In spite of right of birth, and of the deference due to his father's dying counsel to "give ear to him alway," he remains in the background until all the rest are dead and gone, and then appears as the most successful of the five. His character was, however, best suited for the conduct of government in time of peace, when wisdom and policy were of more avail than bravery and enterprise, and this is perhaps the real reason why, in the days of combat and struggle, the fierce spirits of the younger brethren eclipsed for a time the more solid character of Simon.

The news of the choice of Jonathan as the successor of Judas reached Bacchides, who at once endeavoured to seize for execution the new rebel chief.

The Hasmoneans and their followers fled to the dreary wilderness which extends south-east of the mountain-town of Tekoa, and there lived, like the surrounding Arabs, in tents by a great well, or tank, named Asphar.

The site of this place has been hitherto unknown, but seems probably to be represented by the remarkable isolated hill in this desert, about twenty miles from Tekoa, which still bears the name *Safra es Sana*, or "Safra of the tank." It commands a view of the

whole of the desolate wilderness lying above the cliffs of Engedi, and is one of the few places where water can be found in the desert.

The Judean desert, or Jeshimon, has been the refuge for outlaws since the days of David, and to it the Syrian still flies for refuge from the myrmidons of Turkish justice. The Hasmoneans did not, however, feel secure west of Jordan, and Johanan, the eldest brother, was therefore sent to contract an alliance with the Nabatheans, who had already proved friendly to Judas during his expedition to Bashan. On his way, he was attacked by a tribe called Ambri, near Madeba, and slain. The two surviving brothers soon after crossed the Jordan, and fell upon his murderers while they were celebrating a marriage. By a bloody massacre they avenged the death of their elder brother, and afterwards sought refuge from the Ammonites on the one side, and from Bacchides on the other, by hiding in the cane brakes and tamarisk marshes which surround the course of the Jordan.

Bacchides was close on their heels, and it appears that Simon and Jonathan were hemmed in by the Greeks and by the river, probably in one of the great loops which are formed by the tortuous course of the stream. They fought with the courage of despair, and defended themselves even on the Sabbath day, in accordance with the decision which Mattathias had

pronounced eight years before, that self-defence was not forbidden by the Law as an infringement of the Sabbath rest.

Bacchides had now obtained the mastery of the Judean hills, and turned the example of Judas to good account. He strengthened the frontier fortresses, which protected the various approaches to the capital, and shut out the Chasidim in the desert. He, moreover, took hostages from all the chief inhabitants of Jerusalem, and imprisoned them in the Akra Castle.

In the year 159 B.C., Alcimus, the *de facto* High Priest, appointed by Demetrius, and supported by Bacchides and the Hellenists, died, as before related, at Jerusalem. Bacchides was at this time absent at Antioch, and active persecution of the Chasidim ceased for two years, during all which period, however, they appear to have been shut out of the cultivated country. With the absence of Bacchides, the Hasmoneans regained confidence, and the Hellenists sent hastily to Antioch, hoping that an adequate force might be able to surprise and defeat the small band which adhered so firmly to the determination to remain free. They were, however, once more disappointed, and the "wary" Jonathan retired to a desert fortress called Bethbasi—a name suggestive of a marshy site—which Josephus identifies with the old border town of Beth-Hoglah, by the beautiful

blue spring, surrounded by a cane brake, near the mouth of Jordan, on the west of the river.

Bacchides attacked the new fortress, but was discomfited, and obliged to raise the regular siege; for Jonathan succeeded in leaving the town, and fell by night on the camp of the Arab contingent which was assisting the Greeks, while Simon, by concerted plan, made a simultaneous sortie.

The defeated Bacchides revenged himself on the Hellenists in Jerusalem, many of whom he executed, and so left the country, and disappears from the story, having probably fallen into disgrace at Antioch in consequence of his failures. Jonathan profited by his success, entering into a sort of truce with Bacchides before he left, and exchanging prisoners. Thus, in the year 157 B.C., the persecution came to an end, but it was not until 153 B.C. that the two brothers ventured to settle at Michmash, a city in a naturally strong position, close to that friendly desert to which they would be able to retire at once if again attacked by the Greek forces.

Thus the dark days of persecution which followed the death of Judas passed away; and from the year 153 B.C. the power and influence of the Hasmoneans revived, and steadily increased year by year.

The story of the next ten years is one of continual intrigue and conflict. The rival claimants of the throne of Antioch, descendants of Demetrius, the

rightful heir, and of Antiochus Epiphanes, the usurper, struggled with varying success against one another. The "wary," or, to speak more plainly, the crafty Jonathan profited by these dissensions, and wrung concession after concession, privilege after privilege, from either side. He availed himself of the seasons of anarchy to refuse payment of any tribute, and to enlarge and strengthen the borders of the Judean kingdom. The nation increased steadily in wealth and importance, and the demands of the successive Greek suzerains were more and more reduced as the power of the Greeks declined and the strength of the Jews became greater.

In the year 152 B.C., Alexander Balas, the supposed son of the old persecutor and usurper Epiphanes, landed at Accho, and established a rival capital at that port, while Demetrius ruled in Antioch. The assistance which might be obtained from the Jews now became a matter of importance, and Demetrius sought to conciliate Jonathan by giving up the hostages whom Bacchides had taken from the chief families in Jerusalem, and who were kept prisoners in the Castle of Akra. Jonathan, in return, was to furnish a contingent of armed men, and to attack Alexander from the south.

Armed with royal authority, and recognised as the head of his nation, Jonathan hastened from Michmash to Jerusalem, and read to the astonished Hellenists

and to the garrison of the tower the letters of Demetrius. It does not, however, appear that he had any intention of loyally assisting Demetrius, but meant rather to turn the unexpected good fortune which had befallen him to account in strengthening himself against the Hellenists. Alexander Balas was the acknowledged favourite of Rome, and Jonathan knew enough of the power of that nation to be aware that it was politic to adhere to the allies whom Judas had secured, even when they favoured a descendant, or putative son, of the tyrant against whom Judas had revolted.

The first result of the acknowledgment of Jonathan by Demetrius was the abandonment of Judea by the Hellenists. The foreign garrisons established by Bacchides deserted the fortresses, and fled from the country, and only in Bethsura and in the Castle of Akra were any Greeks left. The second result was that Alexander Balas also made overtures to the Jews, and acknowledged Jonathan as High Priest, sending him a purple robe and crown of gold, in which he first appeared publicly at the Feast of Tabernacles. Armour was prepared, soldiers were enrolled, and the Jews appeared ready to join one or other of the rivals; but Jonathan was only preparing for action on his own account, and succeeded, with consummate skill, in carrying out a policy of "masterly inactivity."

Demetrius became alarmed, and promised yet larger concessions; toleration of the Jewish religion throughout Asia, the remission of tribute and taxes, the return of the captives taken to Antioch, the extension of the Jewish frontier towards Samaria, the establishment of Jerusalem as a free city, and of the Temple as a sanctuary for all who fled into it, the rebuilding of the city walls, and a large money subsidy, together with the promised demolition of the hated Castle of Akra, and the gift of the town of Accho (or Ptolemais), when taken, to the Jews. Such were the promised privileges with which Demetrius endeavoured to bribe the nation which he had oppressed for ten years. In return, he asked for 30,000 men, who were to attack Ptolemais simultaneously with a force advancing from Antioch.

To these alluring promises Jonathan and the Jews turned a deaf ear. They were too good to be true, and the dread of incurring the wrath of Rome outweighed them. Demetrius attacked Alexander, without receiving any help from Jonathan; he was defeated, and drowned in a marsh; and although the Jews had held an entirely neutral position, they appear to have gained favour with the victorious Alexander, and Jonathan was named Meridiarch, or tributary Prince of Judea.

Five years passed away, and in 147 B.C. another claimant appeared on the scene. Demetrius, the son

of Demetrius Soter, landed in Cilicia, whence he threatened Antioch.

A certain general, named Apollonius Daüs, was chosen by Alexander Balas as governor of Cœlesyria. He proceeded to garrison Joppa and Jamnia, and declared in favour of the new claimant, Demetrius Nicator. He challenged Jonathan, as the friend of Alexander, to battle in the plains; and, for the first time in the Hasmonean history, the Jews fought a successful battle against cavalry, and unaided by the rugged character of mountain country.

The Jewish army amounted to 10,000 men. They first took possession of Joppa, thus cutting off Apollonius from Antioch. The Greek general, with 8000 foot and 3000 horse, made a feigned retreat towards Ashdod, endeavouring to draw Jonathan into the plains. The Jews, caught between the main force and an ambush of 1000 men, were subjected, for the whole course of one day, to the assaults of cavalry. They stood firm, and the horses were finally tired out by the soft and heavy nature of the ground. In the afternoon, Simon, the brother of Jonathan, with a reserve body, attacked the infantry of the enemy, and the squares, which, under cover of their shields, had resisted so stoutly the repeated cavalry charges, broke up and pursued the defeated Greeks even as far as Ashdod, which was taken, and where the temple of Dagon was burnt.

If the battle of Emmaus may be compared with Austerlitz, the battle of Ashdod may, with equal propriety, be likened to Waterloo. It was the victory of a stubborn general clinging to his position through a series of fierce attacks, and finally relieved by an ally, converting the defence into an irresistible attack.

Ascalon submitted to Jonathan immediately after this battle, and Alexander Balas sent him a golden brooch, or buckle, and bestowed the lands of Ekron on the Jews, thus joining the port of Joppa to the hills bounded by Gezer.

Demetrius Nicator was, however, successful. He was assisted by Ptolemy Euergetes, King of Egypt, to whom he had offered Cœlesyria as a bribe, and whom Alexander Balas, although he had married Ptolemy's daughter Cleopatra, had endeavoured to poison at Ptolemais. Demetrius took Antioch, and Alexander fled to Arabia, where he was beheaded by an Arab chief named Zabdiel. Cleopatra, his widow, became the wife of the victorious Demetrius.

Jonathan was now on the losing side, but appears to have felt strong enough, as the ally of Rome and the conqueror of Apollonius, to resist Demetrius. He took the opportunity of the dissensions at Antioch to renew the attack on the Akra citadel, which, with the frontier town of Bethsura, was now the last refuge of the Macedonian garrisons and of the Hellenists. Demetrius ordered him to desist, but Jonathan went

to Ptolemais, and there, by heavy bribes, induced him to fulfil the promises of his father, Demetrius Soter.

The three coveted frontier districts, Lydda, Ramathem, and Apherema, were taken from Samaria and given to Judea; the country was declared free of tribute, and the taxes were remitted. For these immunities, Jonathan paid the sum of 300 talents.

In the year 146 B.C. further troubles occurred, and again the Hasmoneans profited by them, increasing their own power in proportion as the strength of the rival Seleucidæ was diminished by dissension. Trypho, an old general of Alexander Balas, brought from Arabia the youthful Antiochus, son of Balas, and proclaimed him King. Jonathan at once declared against Demetrius, who had even consented to the withdrawal of the garrison of Akra, in return for a contingent of 3000 Jews, who had been sent to Antioch.

Trypho succeeded in taking Antioch, just as Demetrius himself had previously done; for it would appear that as each new pretender obtained power, he so abused it as to become more hateful to his subjects than his predecessors, and thus the support of the oppressed populace appears to have been always given to the new comer.

While civil war thus raged again in the north,

Jonathan attacked Ascalon and Gaza, and his brother Simon took Bethsura, the last of the strongholds of the foreign garrisons. He next advanced into Galilee, and met the generals of Demetrius on the old battle-field of Hazor, in the mountains near Kadesh Naphtali, where Joshua of old had defeated the Canaanites. Here, though caught in an ambush, he succeeded in rallying his men, and won a victory.

The power of the nation now increased rapidly. The league with Rome was renewed, and another was contracted with the Lacedemonians. The generals of Demetrius were met on the occasion of their next expedition long before they even reached Galilee, and were opposed by Jonathan near Hamath; they had not even the courage to attack him, but retreated by night, leaving their camp-fires burning to deceive the Jews.

The fortress of Akra was now the last stronghold of the foreigners, and a thorn in the side of Jewish rulers. Jonathan determined to starve out the garrison, and to build a wall which should divide Jerusalem, and separate the upper town, or Upper Market, from the Castle. This wall may possibly have been that afterwards described by Josephus as running from west to east on the crest of the highest hill on the south side of the Tyropœon, a line of fortification which is not mentioned as existing in the time of Nehemiah, or at any earlier period.

The garrison were thus cut off from the water-supply at Siloam, and were unable to attack the worshippers approaching the Temple enclosure from the city.

At the same time, Joppa and Ascalon were conquered by Jonathan, and an expedition was undertaken by him against the Nabatheans, during which he succeeded in penetrating as far as Damascus. A new frontier fortress was also built in the region recently acquired from the Samaritans. It was a city called Adida, the modern Hadîtheh, perched on a knoll in the low hills of the Shephelah, just above the plains of Lydda. The old walls of Jerusalem above the Kedron were also repaired.

Three years passed, and Trypho began to plot against the boy-king whom he had set on the throne of Antioch. He appears to have mistrusted Jonathan, whose new fortresses and increasing army he regarded with suspicion. The Jews had paid no tribute, and had changed sides three times during the struggles of the two opposing parties at Antioch. Trypho, therefore, determined to get rid of the wily Hasmonean prince, and advanced into Galilee, where Jonathan met him.

Tempting him with false hopes of the acquisition of Ptolemais, Trypho succeeded in luring the too confident Jonathan into that city, with a following of only 1000 men. He then threw him into prison,

and soon after marched down the plain of Sharon, bringing the unfortunate Hasmonean with him in chains.

Simon, the last of the brothers left to lead the Jews, hastily collected an army, and occupied the new fortress of Adida, which guarded the first approach from the plains near Lydda to the famous pass of Bethhoron. He also threw a garrison into Joppa, thus threatening both flanks of the enemy.

Trypho advanced, and demanded the payment of 100 talents as tribute, and hostages for the fidelity of Jonathan when released. Both were sent; but Trypho still advanced, and finding the Bethhoron pass closed, went south to ascend, if possible, by Adora, and so northwards along the watershed. The strategy of the first year of the revolt was thus repeated, and Simon watched the enemy from the hills just as Judas had watched Lysias before the victory of Beth-sura. An urgent appeal was sent to Trypho from the garrison of Akra, advising him to advance by the difficult and little-known route which led along the desert east of the watershed. But it was winter; heavy snow in the high Hebron hills impeded the movements of the cavalry, and Trypho found himself obliged to retire. He retreated into Cœlesyria, and thence made a raid into the country of Gilead, where he put the unhappy Jonathan to death, after having kept him so long a prisoner with his army.

It is impossible to feel the sympathy for Jonathan which the fate of Judas Maccabæus calls forth. His career of seventeen years had been, on the whole, successful; but it is a history of intrigue and continual change of policy, rather than of bold resistance and unflinching assertion of independence. The wily Jonathan was finally outwitted, and died ignominiously; but the brave Judas fell fighting for the defence of his country against overpowering odds.

The death of Jonathan, in 143 B.C., brought good rather than evil fortune to the Jewish nation. The calm and prudent Simon took his place, and the last years of his life witnessed the constant growth of freedom and prosperity for which the five brethren, of whom he was now the last survivor, had fought so stoutly for twenty-five years.

Simon succeeded in recovering the bones of Jonathan, and erected at Modin a sepulchre for his father, mother, and brothers. This curious monument has now disappeared, but seems to have been regarded as one of the greatest architectural triumphs of the nation. Seven pyramids stood over the seven graves, and cloisters with monoliths and bas-reliefs surrounded the tombs. Ships were carved on the walls of the monument which could be seen from the sea, and trophies of armour were also represented. It would be most interesting to recover the remains of this important building, if they could be found. Curiously

enough, a very fine structural tomb has been discovered at Modin ; but the crosses on the tesselated pavement, and the general character of the work, show it to be of late Christian origin, and the seven pyramids and seven tombs have yet to be found in the neighbourhood.

Simon's first care was to strengthen Judea, which, after the repulse of Trypho, became once more a free country. He built up the frontier fortresses, and garrisoned and provisioned them. Meantime, Trypho had killed the boy-king, and had proclaimed himself. Simon entered into a league with Demetrius, who was at the time in Cilicia, and, in return for his proffered assistance, the country of Judea was declared free of tribute for ever. At the same time, Gaza, the last of the Philistine towns not conquered by the Jews, was taken, and in the year 141 B.C., on the 23rd day of the second month, or about the middle of May, the Castle of Akra at last surrendered, the garrison being starved out. Joppa was fortified as a harbour, a little later, and the league with the Romans was renewed. The country became rich, and hired soldiers were, for the first time in Jewish history, employed by Simon. From the year 142 B.C., when the immunity from tribute was acknowledged by Demetrius, the rightful successor to the throne of the Seleucidæ, the Jews reckoned the first year of their independence, and thus the

commencement of the rule of Simon saw the fulfilment of the great schemes of his brother Judas.

The knoll on which the Akra Castle had stood was levelled by Simon after the capture of that fortress, and no building on that site could in future look down on the Temple hill. The rock was used to fill up the narrow valley east of the Akra hill.

The friendship of Rome was of the greatest value to the Jews at this period. It was principally because they were known to be Roman allies that Demetrius, forgiving the former treachery of Jonathan, was now willing to confer so many benefits on the nation, and this fact is acknowledged even by the Jewish historians of the period. In the year of 139 B.C., a further privilege was granted Simon, that of coining money in his own name, a practical recognition of his independence. This right was conferred by Antiochus Sidetes, brother of Demetrius Nicator; but, a little later, the same monarch, after having defeated Trypho, the usurper, at the maritime city of Dora, situate at the north extremity of the plain of Sharon, once more demanded a tribute from the Jews of 500 talents, or else the surrender of Joppa and Gezer, and the right to garrison Jerusalem.

Thus Simon, who had fought from his youth up, found himself in the last years of his life again obliged to resist the heathen. He refused any payment for the cities which had been won by Jewish

bravery, and appointed his son, John Hyrcanus, the governor of Gezer.

Cendebeus, a general of Antiochus, was despatched to attack Judea. Simon sent his eldest son Judas and his second son Hyrcanus to resist him, being himself too old to take the field. They collected at Modin a force of 20,000 men, and marched down to the plains. This is the first action in which the use of cavalry by the Jews is noticed, and we are thus able to mark the advance in prosperity which had been made since the first days of the revolt.

Jamnia, which had been the refuge of defeated armies for so long, was still in the power of the Greeks. Cendebeus fortified it, as well as the neighbouring town of Cedron (now Katrah), which stands over the corn valley of Sorek on a knoll facing the sandy ridge of Makkedah. The Jews, marching down from the north, boldly crossed the deep trench in the middle of the valley, through which a sluggish stream flows down towards Jamnia, and advanced with their scanty cavalry in the centre and the infantry on either wing. The holy trumpets were blown, and the attack had apparently all the fury of the early victories of Judas. Cendebeus was defeated, and Cedron was taken, the defeated host being pursued as far as Ashdod, which was also burnt, for the third time in thirty years.

Simon, the last of the five brethren, was not, however, destined to die in his bed. His four brothers had all perished by violence, two in the field and two by treachery. The same fate overtook him in his old age. His daughter was married to a certain Ptolemy, who was made governor of the Jericho district. This man conceived the ambition of destroying the whole Hasmonean family, and of succeeding to their position. He entertained Simon and two of his sons, Judas, the eldest, and Mattathias, the youngest, at a banquet in the fortress of Doch, which stood above the beautiful spring welling up beneath the steep cliffs of the mountain which overhangs Jericho. Simon and his sons had feasted and "drunk largely," when armed men were introduced, and the venerable High Priest was slain with his sons and servants.

The plot, however, was not entirely successful, for John Hyrcanus, the second son of Simon, was at Gezer, and escaped the massacre. He no sooner heard of it than he hastened to secure Jerusalem, and to put to death the myrmidons of Ptolemy who were sent to kill him.

Thus, in the year 135 B.C., the last of the five famous brothers was slain. He had been the only one to see the complete fulfilment of the hopes of freedom which Judas had been the first to entertain; but it was not until the time of his successor, Hyrcanus, that the summit of Jewish prosperity was reached.

John Hyrcanus succeeded in troublous times. He had first to attack Ptolemy, who held prisoner the wife of Simon, and endeavoured to make him desist from the siege of Doch by threatening to kill his mother. The event occurred in a Sabbatic year, and the new High Priest rigorously observed the Law by relinquishing the siege. Ptolemy then killed his captives, and afterwards fled to Philadelphia.

In the same year, Antiochus Sidetes, taking advantage of the Jewish customs, attacked Judea and besieged Jerusalem. The precedent introduced by the Hasmoneans allowed, however, of defensive operations during the Sabbath and Sabbatic year, and the city was stoutly defended. A truce was obtained by Hyrcanus at the Feast of Tabernacles, and the moderation shown by Antiochus, who sent presents to the Temple during the cessation of hostilities, produced so good an effect, when contrasted with the intolerance of his namesake, Epiphanes, that a peace was arranged, and John agreed to pay tribute for Joppa, Gezer, and other border towns: he, however, stoutly refused to admit a garrison into Jerusalem, and succeeded in carrying his point, giving instead 500 talents, and hostages for his fidelity to the new agreement.

In the terms of this treaty we mark the great advance made by the Jews. Had such proposals been suggested in the earlier period of the revolt, the

generals of Epiphanes would have treated them with contempt. The suzerains of Antioch had now been forced to recognise the national vitality of the Jews, and to acknowledge that no permanent peace could be expected in Judea unless the nation were left free to follow its own laws, and to obey its native chiefs. Jerusalem might be reached after a hard-fought campaign, but could not be permanently held without immense expenditure of men and money. It was evidently a wiser policy to avoid the risk of incurring the wrath of Rome by establishing friendly relations with her allies; and all that could now be expected from the semi-independent Prince of Judea was a yearly tribute and a contingent of trained soldiers.

It is said that, on this occasion, Hyrcanus opened the tomb of David and took out 3000 talents, with part of which he paid Antiochus. But the story seems very doubtful, and contrary to Jewish habit. It was perhaps a tradition by which the common people accounted for the wealth of the Hasmonean family.

The history of Hyrcanus for the next twenty-five years is one of continually-growing prosperity. The rule of the wise Antiochus terminated in 129 B.C., when he was slain in Parthia. Then in three years' time, three kings succeeded one another in Antioch, and the rapidly-increasing weakness of the

Seleucidæ allowed the Jews to become practically independent.

Hyrcanus attacked and destroyed the city of Samaria in 129 B.C. He levelled the temple on Gerizim to the ground. He conquered the Idumeans on the south, and forced them to accept circumcision. He retook Joppa, Gezer, Adora, and Mareshah, and he obtained the recognition by the Romans of the first of these as a Jewish port. In the year 114 B.C. he became entirely independent, and thus, half-a-century after the death of Judas Maccabæus, the summit of Jewish prosperity was attained under the wise rule of his famous nephew.

It will, perhaps, have been clear that the main objects for which the Jews strove throughout this period were those to which Judas had attached importance, namely, the securing of the frontiers and of the great passes by fortresses, the destruction of the foreign garrison in Jerusalem, and the establishment of a treaty with Rome which might overawe the Asiatic heathen world. This policy, first inaugurated by Judas, was pursued by his successors, and to it the freedom and prosperity of the country were due. With success, however, the ambition of the nation enlarged its sphere of action, and thus the destruction of Samaria, the conquest of Philistia, and the acquisition of a port at Joppa, were important results, scarcely contemplated in the earlier days of the rule of Judas.

In the preceding chapters we have thus traced the growth of independence and the revival of national prosperity. It remains to consider the great historical results which followed the full attainment of freedom, and the causes which led to the rapid loss of a liberty so hardly won.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RESULTS OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE summit of Jewish prosperity consequent on the revolt of Modin was reached, as shown in the last chapter, about half-a-century after that event. We have seen that even the rude shock which was suffered by the infant state in the loss of the patriotic founder, Judas Maccabæus, was not fatal; and that, in consequence of the alliance which he had contracted with the powerful Roman republic, the independence which he had won for his country was preserved as long as that country was worthy of it, and as long as his brothers and their immediate successor displayed the same courage, the same wisdom, and the same singleness of heart by means of which Judas had freed the land from its foreign tyrants.

The change which had been wrought in the half-century of which the history has been sketched, was far greater and more marked than that which the

lapse of time had effected in the course of the three preceding centuries.

Not only were the Jews now independent, and free even from tribute, ruled by their own High Priests, and governed according to the Law of Moses, but the wealth of the country had increased, and the social condition of its inhabitants had also been materially modified. The limits of the little Judean state in the most prosperous days of the life of Judas had been confined, as has been shown, to the mountains round Jerusalem. But the conquests of Jonathan, Simon, and Hyrcanus had added to this original territory rich lands in the lower hills, in the fertile Philistine plains, and in the well-watered mountains of Hebron.

Along the plain of Sharon, Strato's Tower (afterwards Cæsarea), with Apollonia and Joppa, were now counted as Jewish towns. In Philistia, Ashdod, Ekron, Ascalon, and Gaza, with the three towns of Anthedon, Raphia, and Rhinocolura, south of Gaza, had been won; in the low hills east of Philistia, Mareshah and the hill-fortress of Adoraim; in Samaria, the three border towns of Lydda, Apherema, and Ramathem; in Lower Galilee, Tabor, Carmel, and the district of Bethshean. On the east of Jordan, Moab, Gilead, and Bashan had been overrun, and Seleucia, Gamala, Heshbon, Madeba, Lemba, Oronas, Gelithon, Zara, and Pella were garrisoned.

Thus the borders of the land were extended until

the Jewish possessions were five times as great as in the year 164 B.C., and the boundaries seem to have been almost the same which we find given by the Tosaphta in the second century of our era, though, perhaps, slightly curtailed on the north and in the extreme south.

Not only were these boundaries enlarged, but the neighbouring tribes beyond them had been brought into subjection. The Samaritans had been conquered and their Temple was destroyed; the Idumeans had been obliged to accept circumcision. Yet more important was the acquisition of a seaboard, and of the hardly-won port of Joppa; for although, as previously shown, the Jews do not appear to have been addicted to trade even so late as the Herodian period, still the country was opened to foreign merchants, and communication was established with the Levantine and Egyptian coast towns.

Nor are indications wanting to prove that the wealth of the country had materially increased during the period of increasing prosperity. Simon and Hyrcanus were rich men, remarkable for their treasure of gold and silver plate. They were able to equip and maintain a large body of mercenaries at their own expense, and a golden shield of 1000 pounds weight was sent by Simon to Rome. We find also in the year 139 B.C. the first mention of the existence of cavalry among the Jews; and those who

are familiar with the modern native inhabitants of Palestine well know that the increase in the number of horses is the first sign of increased wealth in the country.

Nor must the introduction of a native coinage, and of a special Jewish money, in which the Temple tax was paid, be forgotten as an indication of a settled and prosperous condition of the land.

Such being the successful outcome of that apparently unimportant insurrection which was initiated by one impulsive and unpremeditated act of the aged Mattathias at Modin, we may well inquire how it came to pass that the success was so transient, and why it was that, within a century, the Jews were once more a conquered nation, ruled by foreigners, and not destined to become permanently a free people.

It was indeed a glorious historical opportunity which the nation allowed to slip by. It was a time when the power of the Seleucidæ was no longer anything more than a name, and when the shadow of Rome had as yet scarcely touched the coasts of Asia—when the energies of other nations were absorbed by internal struggles, or by preparations for future action. It was thus a time most favourable for the establishment and consolidation of a great Hebrew monarchy, which might have played a part in the politics of the world, and have aspired to inherit the

Asiatic conquests of Alexander the Great and the empire of the Seleucidæ, which was falling so fast into ruins.

It was not by the inroads of foreign conquerors that the liberty so hardly won was snatched from the Jews: it was through their own incapacity for freedom that they became once more subjected to a foreign despotism. The corruption of the native princes, the violence of internal dissensions, and the unsuitability of archaic institutions to a modified social condition of the nation, were the true causes of the decline and fall of the independent Jewish monarchy.

The Jews may be compared to the French in one respect, namely, that they are a people who require a master. From the time of Moses to the days of Herod, they were ever a "stiff-necked" race. Their times of prosperity coincided with the lives of individual rulers of special genius, rather than with any period of national revival of energy and progress; and thus their history is one of constant vicissitudes, and their good fortune has always been mainly dependent on the personal character of their rulers.

The story of the decline of Jewish independence is a melancholy record of fatal infatuation and misdirected energy in a proud and gifted people; but it is also the history of a most important and interesting period, for in it we trace the origin of that special condition of the nation, and of that special develop-

ment of the national religion, which prepared the way for Christianity. The history of the first century before Christ is the sequel to that of the war of independence; and a sketch of the events immediately succeeding the full attainment of freedom, and of the rapid development of those religious schools which existed in the time of our Lord, is a fitting appendix to the account which has been given of the life and times of Judas Maccabæus.

The most remarkable characteristic of the early Hasmonean period was the expectant attitude of the nation. It was a prophetless age, and a time when the nation was eagerly looking forward to the appearance of a new prophet, a divinely-commissioned teacher, who should instruct the people as to their future. This expectant attitude was shared by Judas and his brothers. They made no attempt to usurp any permanent authority, and claimed only to be the dictators chosen until the divinely-appointed leader should appear. They succeeded, indeed, to the vacant office of High Priest, but their ambition never prompted them to claim the title of King.

In the last years of the rule of Hyrcanus a change occurred in this expectant condition. The nation had become prosperous; the Hasmonean house had become rich. The sons of Hyrcanus represented the third generation of hereditary chiefs and rulers, and their aged father was, in fact, though not by title, the

independent King of Judah, no less than the religious head of the nation. He coined money in his own name, he retained hired soldiers at his own expense, he lacked only the name of king, and, though too wise to assume it, he yet became obnoxious in his last years to the suspicions of those of the more zealous of the Chasidim, who perceived that the Hasmoneans had, in fact, combined in one the two dignities of prince and pontiff.

The original party of the Chasidim, or "pious," had developed into the strong sect of the Pharisees, representing the views of the populace and of the more fanatical lower classes. The original party of the Karaites had also grown into the Sadducean and Baitocean sects, representing the religion of the higher class and the calm philosophy of the better educated. The popular party was the one which had raised the Hasmoneans to their powerful position; the educated party was that to which they most naturally inclined when their position was won.

Thus, even before the death of the venerated Hyrcanus, a coldness had arisen between the ruling family and the party to which it owed its rise. The cause is most clearly explained by Josephus, who relates that Hyrcanus demanded of the Pharisees whether they could accuse him of having in any way departed from the Law. The general answer was a commendation of all his actions; but one of the

younger and less temperate of the Pharisees reminded Hyrcanus that he held the office of High Priest as well as that of civil governor, and advised him to resign the former, to which he was not legally entitled, his mother having been a slave.

This imputation Hyrcanus considered to be an insult, and he was yet further enraged by the very lenient view which the Pharisees, as a body, took of the offence committed by Eleazar. He therefore separated himself from this party, and appears to have even punished those who adhered to the innumerable observances which these Puritans had imposed on the nation. Thus the Sadducees once more recovered the ascendency which they had possessed before the time of Alexander the Great.

In this episode we see the first symptoms of national disintegration, and the first cause of the decay of the Hasmonean power. The popular party saw with displeasure the assumption of actual hereditary and royal power by the family of which the members had been hitherto considered merely as temporary leaders. They were also shocked by the innovation on the old constitution in the combination of the two offices of priest and king in a single person. The quarrel of the Hasmonean family with the Pharisees resulted not only in the overthrow of that illustrious house, but also in the ruin of the Jewish nation.

In the year 106 B.C. John Hyrcanus died. His name was held in affectionate and reverent remembrance by the nation as the last great ruler of the Hasmonean family. In later times, he was credited with having been favoured with the gift of prophecy, and several predictions made by him are recorded by Josephus, including the sad presage of the corruption and ruin of his house.

At this time we meet with a significant change in the Jewish coinage. The coins of Hyrcanus bore the simple inscription, "Johanan, the High Priest," in the ancient Jewish character; but the coins of his son, Alexander Jannæus, bear on the one side "Jonathan, the King," in Hebrew, and on the other, in Greek, "Alexander, the King." In this change we see not only the formal assumption of regal power, which was made by Aristobulus and Alexander immediately after their father's death, but, yet further, a falling away from the original spirit of the Hasmonean family, in the use of Greek language, which caused the title of Philhellen to be given to the unhappy Aristobulus.

Hyrcanus appears to have known the worthlessness of his sons, and to have felt the necessity of conforming to the national prejudices in the separation of the civil and religious offices which he had held simultaneously. Thus, while Aristobulus succeeded him as High Priest, the civil supremacy was left by

Hyrcanus to his wife, the mother of his five sons.

But on the death of Hyrcanus, the smouldering dissensions of the two opposing parties burst into flame. The sons threw off the cloak which had covered their ambition, and Aristobulus, after imprisoning his mother, boldly proclaimed himself King without relinquishing his office of High Priest. Intrigues and counter-intrigues followed, and within a year the miserable usurper of the throne of David died, after having murdered his favourite brother, Antigonus, and after having starved his mother to death.

Alexander Jannæus, the third son of Hyrcanus, succeeded to his brother's office of High Priest, to his brother's childless wife, and to his brother's title of king. He reigned, indeed, twenty-seven years, but the whole period was passed in a fierce struggle against the Pharisees, in which the fortunes of war fluctuated from side to side; and although in the end Alexander was successful, he felt that the struggle must result in the destruction of his house, unless his successors were prepared to bow to the national will. By his dying advice, Alexandra, his widow, made peace with the Pharisees, and internal dissensions were for a moment calmed.

The corruption of the Hasmonean family was the second great cause of the downfall of the nation.

Judas and his brethren had been remarkable for their patriotism and for their self-abnegation. Hyrcanus, in the next generation, aroused the jealousy of the stricter interpreters of the Law, but was, nevertheless, revered and loved. The degeneracy of his sons was shown in the sudden assumption of royal rank to which they had no claim. In their days, Jew was arrayed against Jew, and foreign mercenaries were employed by both parties. But the quarrel was for the moment closed with the wise concessions of Alexandra, and the last disgrace was reserved for the fourth generation, when, in the year 64 B.C., the heathen Pompey was called in to arbitrate between the miserable sons of Alexander Jannæus, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. The capture of Jerusalem by the Romans occurred during the following year.

It was thus that the fairest hopes of the nation were disappointed in the decay of the great family whose first representatives had delivered Israel. The history of these internal dissensions is in itself of little interest; but the effect on the temper of the nation, and on the national hopes for the future, was of no small importance.

There is something strangely pathetic in the unwavering and passionate faith which the Jews, through all ages, have held so firmly in the final triumph of their race over the surrounding heathen, and in the future time of happiness and

prosperity to which, even in the darkest years of affliction, they have ever looked steadily forward. Again and again those bright hopes seemed about to be fulfilled. In the time of Ezra, the scattered Israel of the captivity was re-assembled only to fall under the heavy yoke of the Seleucidæ. In the days of Judas, the nation struggled successfully for freedom, and the expected Prophet was awaited eagerly; but time passed on, earthly ambition corrupted the purity of patriotism, internal feuds weakened the liberated nation, and the strong arm of Rome crushed Israel down once more into bondage. Yet, even after this second bitter disappointment, the Jews looked forward with undiminished eagerness to the future, and consoled themselves under defeat and in decay with the hope of a future King whose right to the throne of David should be beyond dispute.

The Hasmoneans had been guilty of two innovations: they had combined the two offices of priest and king, and they had assumed the royal dignity, which belonged, in Jewish estimation, only to the House of David. Still, the family was of pure Jewish stock, descendants of Aaron, and immediate successors of the great deliverer of Israel, Judas Maccabæus. But when the Hasmonean House had fallen into decay, and the crafty Idumean Herod had assumed the power which they had failed to maintain, there was no longer any doubt in the Jewish mind as

to the usurpation of a title which belonged only to the descendants of David. Herod was not even a Jew, and neither the commands of Moses nor the predictions of the Prophets could be supposed in any way to refer to him.

Thus the expectation of a future native King, which had perhaps first sprung up at the time of the quarrel between Hyrcanus and the Pharisees, waxed stronger and stronger, until, by the time of Christ, it had completely taken possession of the heart of the people. The expectancy of the days of Judas was the expectancy of an immediate restoration of the Theocracy under a prophet divinely inspired and of indisputable authority. But that mood of the national mind passed away, and as the learned pored more earnestly over the writings of the Prophets, they became more deeply imbued with the conviction that a future King of the lineage of David was promised to them. It was no son of Hasmon that Isaiah described as a "rod from the stem of Jesse," and it was no Gentile Herod that Jeremiah intended in speaking of the "branch of the House of David."

The earliest Jewish literature in which the expectation of a King-Messiah forms a conspicuous feature appears about the time of the death of Hyrcanus. The Book of Enoch, so remarkable for its Messianic predictions, is dated about that period. In it the Chasidim are represented by the symbol of lambs.

Jonathan is the lamb slain by ravens, and Hyrcanus is supposed to be intended by the great horn shooting forth later. In the year 124 B.C., the earliest Sibylline book was written, the influence of which, about the time of Christ, we trace in Virgil's Georgics. A crop of similar literature sprang up between the time of Hyrcanus and the Christian era, and the nation was consoled for its loss of a great opportunity by the promise of an immediate deliverance, and of permanent prosperity to follow.

The subject of the future King was studied with the same minute care and attention which characterised the whole of the Pharisaic interpretation of Scripture. In the Targums, which, though committed to writing much later, were yet founded on ancient traditional interpretation of the Law and the Prophets, we find ample evidence of the eagerness with which the Jews seized on the faintest indications of prophetic promise of a Messiah.

Of the seventy passages in Scripture which were held to be of Messianic character, only two contained the word Messiah, and in one of these exceptional passages it is coupled with the name of Cyrus. In the large majority of cases, it is very difficult to trace the connection which existed in Jewish thought between the words of the original and the additional comment of the Targum.

It is also striking to find that, in their eagerness to

refer every promise of good to the immediate future, the Jews classed even those passages in the prophets which distinctly and by name speak of Cyrus and Zerubbabel as being predictions of the future Anointed King. It is yet more remarkable that they carefully avoided any comment on those passages to which the Apostles of Christ afterwards appealed with so much force, and which represent the chosen One as a man of sorrows, despised and rejected, cut off from the land of the living, and made an offering for sin.

The great influence which was exerted on the nation by the Book of Daniel, is evidenced by the frequent references in the gospels to its predictions, and by the number of later works which imitate its style; but the Jews have never classed this book with the writings of the earlier prophets. Their prophetic canon closed with Malachi; and Daniel was classed in the third and inferior category of Hagiographa, with the poetic books, and the later histories subsequent to the time of the captivity. The Book of Daniel contained a distinct prophecy, following the detailed history of the overthrow of Antiochus Epiphanes—a prophecy of Messiah the Prince, who should be cut off after seventy Sabbatic years. It is a most suggestive fact that, on this passage, there is no Messianic Targum. The Jew consoled himself with a passionate belief in the future glory of Messiah,

and shut his eyes resolutely to any intimation of the rejection of that Messiah by the chosen people.

The expectation of a future King of the line of David was the immediate outcome of the decadence of the great Hasmonean family. The rise and prosperity of that family, on the other hand, fostered the development of the great sect of the Pharisees, and of the monastic spirit which characterised the Essenes. Both these sects exerted an influence on the infancy of Christianity, and they were thus important results of the period of independence.

With the triumph of the Chasidim under Judas, and with the death of Onias and the flight of his son to Egypt, the heretical school of the Mizraimites disappeared from Palestine. The orthodox Jews who remained in the country were all agreed in the fundamental principle of accepting the Law of Moses as the only rule of life, and in rejecting every innovation derived from foreign sources.

There were, however, many points of view from which that Law might be regarded. It might be regarded as a civil and religious code, prescribing certain duties and prohibiting certain crimes. It might be considered as an inspired work, containing all that was necessary for salvation, and divinely ordained to be for ever sufficient for the wants of the nation. Or, again, its principles might be accepted, and rules founded on them might be taught, fitted for

the more advanced civilisation and more complex social condition of the people. Thus, while all the Palestinian Jews agreed in the acceptance of the Law as divine in origin, and destined to endure through all time, various schools arose which took various views of the spirit in which the Law should be studied.

The more ancient school, that of the Karaites, and of the earlier High Priests after Ezra, contented itself with a literal interpretation of the commands of Moses. What was written in the Law they obeyed literally, neither adding to nor diminishing from its injunctions. This was the spirit of the better class of the Sadducees. They held that any intelligent man could understand the plain letter of the Law; they consequently never implicitly followed any leader, and were in the habit of referring back, each for himself, to the written Scripture. All their tenets were in accord with this frame of mind. They looked forward to the temporal blessings promised by Moses, and to the temporal punishments which he had predicted as the results of disobedience. They held that they were themselves responsible for their own actions, and that God could not be considered the author of the evil which such as disobeyed His plain commands brought on themselves.

They found in the Law no doctrines as to the spiritual world, and their views concerning it were accordingly indistinct. The more intellectual were

content to remain in an attitude of philosophic doubt on a subject with regard to which Moses had taught nothing; the more ignorant, or narrow-minded, found it easiest to deny altogether the possibility of a future life not revealed by the great Law-giver.

Such were the tenets of the literalists. It was the religion of the prosperous, the powerful, and the cultivated. To those who had riches, it was easy to believe that they had received the blessings promised for obedience in this life; those who had happiness in this world were less anxious to look forward to the world to come. And thus Josephus tells us that the Sadducees were "able to persuade none but the rich."

The mass of the people were neither happy nor rich; their piety was not rewarded by the promised blessings of land, fruit, and victory, and they stood sorely in need of a comforting hope of future recompense.

It was for this simple reason that the Pharisees attained such complete mastery over the popular mind. They taught those doctrines which naturally most fascinated the poor. They offered themselves as leaders whom the ignorant might follow with implicit faith; they surrounded the Law with imposing ceremonial, calculated to inspire awe and respect; they pointed out to the unfortunate and the oppressed a glorious future of eternal happiness.

The spirit of the Pharisaic school was in full accord

with the general tendency of the Semitic mind. They surrounded the figure of Moses with a halo of sanctity, and inculcated the same veneration in descending order, as due to his recognised successors and interpreters, down to the men of the great Synagogue. They upheld the authority of tradition as superior to individual intelligence, and taught that no Scripture should be of unauthorised, or private, interpretation. To use the language of the present day, the believer was to listen "to the voice of the Church in all ages," rather than to his own understanding of the Scriptures.

Thus it was from the Pharisees that the great mass of Jewisl literature proceeded. The Sadducees referred back constantly to the original; they were content with the "Bible only." The Pharisees handed down the traditional interpretations which they derived from the fathers, and commented on them. Thus arose Targum, Talmud, and Apocrypha, crystallising the thought of earlier teachers, drawing tighter and tighter the bands which bound down the Jewish mind, and which gradually paralysed its freedom of action.

The mass of comment which thus accumulated was not the result of mere idle speculation or curious controversy. The true motive was the conviction that the right understanding of the words of Moses was all important. It was necessary that not a shadow of

doubt should exist as to the complete and accurate fulfilment of his commands. Thus, in its most minute details, every ordinance was settled by a complicated system of exegesis, and a "hedge" was made round the Law itself to prevent even an approach to the forbidden being possible for the unwary. Such was the not unworthy origin of that inflexible and tyrannical system which brought the pious Pharisee into a bondage allowing no freedom of action even in the most trivial of his daily duties.

From the veneration with which this school regarded the Pentateuch, it naturally arose that the Law came gradually to be considered as intended for all time, and as including all that it was necessary for man to know.

The doctrines not actually contained in the Books of Moses were elicited thence by a species of logic which we sometimes recognise as pure casuistry, and sometimes fail at all to comprehend. It is evident that institutions suited to a pastoral age must have proved insufficient, or even positively ill-adapted, in a more complex condition of society. The Pharisee escaped from such difficulties by the invention of "legal fictions," as in the case of the Sabbath-day's journey, or of the law of Yeboom, in which, by additional legislation, the original commands of the Law were entirely evaded. In many cases, on the other hand, the western mind entirely fails to trace

any connection between the doctrine of the Scripture and the deductions drawn from it by the Rabbis.

The Pharisees were divided into many sects, and the doctrines of individual teachers were often contradictory; but the authority of tradition, the all-sufficiency of the Law, when rightly explained, and the necessity of infinite precision in obeying its commands, were the main features of doctrine common to all grades of the sect.

The Pharisaic teaching as to the future was well calculated to console and awe those to whom it was addressed. The cold scepticism of the philosophic Sadducee neither touched the imagination nor comforted the heart of the poor. The popular teachers spoke of a cavernous abode beneath the earth—a Sheol or Hades—where the souls of Jews, good or bad (for Gentiles, like the brute beasts, had, they said, no souls at all), awaited the final judgment. The good wandered in Elysian fields, with sunshine and angelic comforters; the evil lay in a purgatory which was to be but the prelude to eternal agony, tormented in corporeal bodies by fiery worms, and in view of a lake of flame.

To such a fate, the Pharisee taught, men were predestined by God, though in some respects their destinies were due to their own wills.

As to the future which was to succeed the actual present, the doctrines of various schools differed.

Some of the more material thinkers expected an earthly paradise, peopled by Jews clothed with new corporeal bodies. The reign of Messiah was to be that of an earthly King, ruling in Jerusalem. The land was to be fertile beyond all that had ever been formerly known on earth. Gigantic grapes, which could scarce be drawn by a yoke of oxen; enormous ears of corn; huge olive trees, were described in language which could not fail to strike the imagination of the populace. Upon a thousand hills in some unknown land Behemoth was fattening for the final feast; Leviathan slept in the deeps, prepared as food for the great day; and gigantic geese in the most remote desert were seen by one Rabbi already fattened for the millennium.

Great longevity, innumerable wives and children, and unfailing happiness, were promised to the devout as a recompense for present suffering, and for painful fulfilment of the iron mandates of the Law.

At the other extremity of the scale were those who looked forward to a spiritual rather than an earthly reward. They pictured the reign of Messiah as following, rather than preceding, the destruction of the present earth. The immortal spirits of the just, together with those yet living on earth at the judgment day, were to be caught up into the sky, where the new Jerusalem would hang suspended a mile above the surface of the hills of Palestine. A heavenly

temple with a continual service, a companionship with the saints of past ages, and the felicity of beholding the Divine face for ever, were the promised blessings, according to the more transcendental of Rabbinical writers.

Such, then, was the double tendency of Jewish orthodoxy after the extinction of the Hellenising heresy, and such were the principal schools which disputed together in the time of our Lord. There were, however, two other sects which require some description, as being the direct and natural outcome of the gradual growth of Jewish civilisation. The first was the sect of the Essenes; the second, the school of Hillel. Like the Sadducees and Pharisees, both these smaller sects were orthodox in their acceptance of the Law, and in their rejection of foreign customs; but they differed in their appreciation of the adaptability of the Law to the existing wants of the nation.

We have seen that, from the time of the expulsion of the Hellenists and the extinction of the family of Onias, heresy ceased to spread or to exert any power in Palestine; the nation shrank back from any contact with strangers, and turned its eyes inwards from beholding the vanity of Gentile philosophy and idolatry.

It is true that, under Herod, the Jews were forced to see, without any audible murmur, the re-introduc-

tion of heathen games into Jerusalem. It is true that a sect arose of time-serving Herodians, who thought it permissible to "bow the knee to Rimmon," and to conform to the laws of a foreign political power which they had no strength to resist—a sect which was vigorously opposed by the fanatical Zealots who refused to recognise any King but Jehovah. But these were questions of politics rather than of religion, and the result of an antagonism between Judaism and the Gentile world, not of any such attempt to harmonise philosophy with faith as had been made by the Mizraimites and Hellenists before the revolt of Judas.

Yet, although the observance of the Law was considered, after the attainment of freedom, to be the most important duty of every Jew, it is clear that, as society developed, and the prosperity of the land increased, it was no longer generally possible to devote the whole life to the religious observances demanded by that Law, which had been so much more easily fulfilled in the old days of pastoral existence in the wilderness. Hence originated that tendency to seclusion from the world which we mark also in the earlier Rechabites, dwelling in tents, and owning neither lands nor houses.

The successors of the Rechabites were the Essenes, who first appear in history at the time of the assumption of royal dignity by Aristobulus, son of Hyrcanus,

or about a century before the Christian era. In Egypt, the same movement among the Mizraimites is marked by the appearance of the contemplative Therapeutæ, who were much like the modern Indian *Fakîrs.*

Among the Essenes we find the monastic spirit fully developed, and, in many respects, we trace so close a resemblance to the early Christians, that we are led to the conclusion that the Apostles must have made many converts among the Essenes, even if, under the name of Essen, Josephus does not describe the disciples of Christ. As indicating the monastic character of the sect, we may point to their austerity and seclusion, to their vows of chastity, their charitable actions, their initiation, and various grades of sanctity. From Pliny we learn that the Essenes inhabited the Judean desert, dwelling in those numerous caves which are now found throughout its extent. The points of resemblance to the Christians of Apostolic times are chiefly the non-observance of sacrifices, community of goods, and prohibition of oaths.

The Essenes had no fixed or abiding city. In every town they appointed some one to help and entertain those of their own sect journeying through the place. In their conventual establishments they wore a peculiar white dress and distinctive girdle, and were employed in husbandry during the intervals of religious exercise and purification.

The doctrines of the Essenes were, however, tinged by foreign influence. In their neglect of the Temple sacrifices, and in their condemnation of wedlock, they departed from the full observance of the Law. They were even not free from the ancient Mehistanite heresies brought from Babylon. They preserved carefully the "names of the angels," which the Rabbins say were first learned by the Jews during the captivity. Josephus notices their veneration for the sacred rays of light, and Philo says that they turned towards the rising sun to pray. They were complete fatalists, and believed in the immortality of the souls of both good and bad—a belief which was not common to the large majority of the nation, who believed only in the immortality of the righteous. The resurrection they understood with Philo to be the liberation of the soul from bondage in the body, when, bursting as from a prison, it should mount upwards with joy. They also approached the Egyptian school in their allegorical interpretation of many parts of Scripture.

The seclusion of life which marked the Essenes—the natural result of the growth of Jewish civilisation—rendered them peculiarly venerable in the eyes of the multitude. To the poor they were known as skilled herbalists and charitable physicians. In the towns the white garments of the ascetic might occasionally be seen; and the awe of the populace was enhanced by traditions of prophecies which had been made by

various Essenes, and which had been fulfilled in a most remarkable manner. The respect for constituted authority, which was part of the initiatory vow of the order, rendered the Essenes, moreover, less obnoxious to the ruling class than the turbulent Pharisees or the impracticable Zealots. Such was the character of the first monastic order which appeared among the Jews, and of which the main peculiarities were but repeated in the Christian hermits and monks of the fourth century of our era.

The great institutions of the Law of Moses which were intended to bring peace and order, and to prove a blessing to the nation, became, through nervous terror of transgression, a curse rather than a boon. Year by year, and decade by decade, the bondage became more grievous, and the iron bands were drawn tighter. The human intellect was dwarfed, the human will was deadened, by the growing accumulation of minute and trivial observances imposed on the devout by the self-torturing ingenuity of their teachers. Chinese etiquette is scarcely less irksome than were the prescriptions of the Pharisees; and it was not in human nature to bear for ever patiently the tyranny of the narrow-minded and fanatical, who, like the followers of Shammai, "made the Law heavy."

Thus we are led to understand the origin of the third great orthodox school, which found a leader in

the illustrious Hillel. This great man, who is said to have been a descendant of the House of David, came to Jerusalem from Nehardea, in Babylonia, in the very year in which the last male descendant of the Hasmoneans was murdered by Herod the Great. He had already distinguished himself by arranging, in six books, the innumerable treatises of the Mishna, or second law. He had been brought up in the atmosphere of the Zoroastrian religion, which had many points of attraction for the Jew, notably its detestation of graven images. He had been exempt from the narrowing and deadening influence of the Jerusalem school. Thus with Hillel arose a form of doctrine which, though near akin in system to that of the Pharisees, was yet marked by a nobler and more generous interpretation of the meaning to be attached to the words of Moses. Many of the recorded sayings of Hillel breathe the same spirit which is found in the teachings of Christ; and his disciples "made the Law light," not because they lightly esteemed its authority, but because they revived the nobler and more beneficent spirit of the original.

While such was the internal growth of the nation, its external relations are also worthy of a slight notice.

The first result of the revolt was the expulsion of the Hellenists from Palestine, and their dispersion in

Egypt, Syria, and the islands of the Archipelago. The energy of the national character, one of the most marked traits of Jewish nature, urged many of the more adventurous to wander even as far as Greece and Rome. From the centre, which never ceased to exist in Babylonia, the Jews spread over Asia Minor and towards India and the Caucasus. The remnant of the other tribes of Israel which did not return to Samaria, was in the same way dispersed, and Jewish jealousy at Jerusalem originated the idea, which is still so commonly believed, that the ten tribes never returned to Palestine, but were lost in an unknown country, where, according to mediæval Jewish writers, they still existed as a nation.

Jewish influence on the heathen world is marked by the connection between Jewish and Roman literature. It was due, perhaps, to two main causes. In the first place, they presented the striking spectacle of a people perfectly and irrevocably convinced of their own superiority and of their knowledge of the truth. They came amongst listless speculators, cynical sceptics, and dreaming philosophers, and announced the certainty of their own faith.

In the second place, they brought a pure and noble conception of the spiritual nature of the Divinity amongst those who were wearied by the vain and blasphemous fables of a corrupted mythology. The augur who met an augur might mock secretly the

credulity of the multitude; the Jew who met a Jew could only complacently admire their common superiority in knowledge and piety to the rest of the world. The force and energy of character peculiar to this wonderful people thus imposed respect on even the æsthetic Greek and the proud and philosophic Roman.

Such, then, were the important historical results of the heroic struggle which had been brought to a successful issue by Judas Maccabæus.

The insidious advance of Hellenism was arrested, and the heresy was crushed for ever in Palestine. The Jew was left free to follow the religion of his forefathers without fear of persecution.

The study of the sacred books then became so intense that the nation fell at last into a bondage of its own creation, and by the time of Christ the burden became too heavy to be borne.

The growth of civilisation naturally developed a tendency, among the more pious and contemplative, towards seclusion from the busy world, and thus fostered the birth of the monastic spirit.

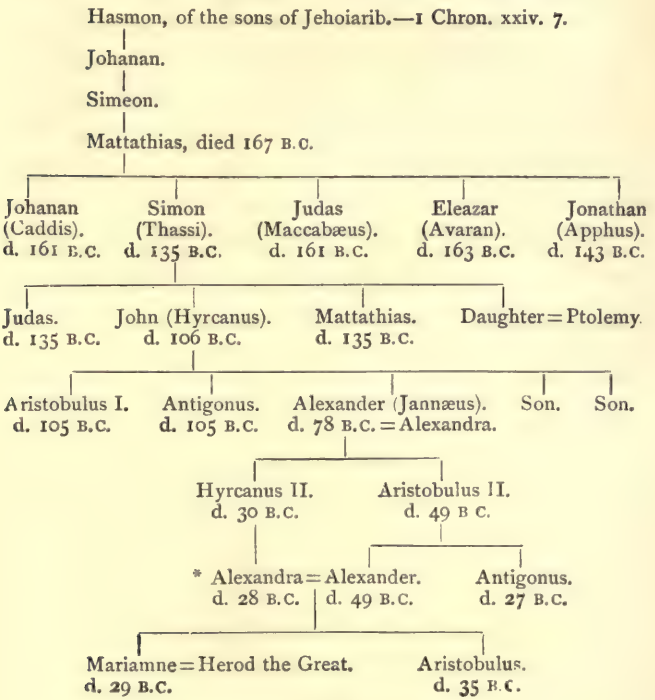
Finally, a natural reaction, from the narrowness of the Pharisaic doctrine, produced the school of Hillel; and thus, by the Christian era, it was becoming clear, to the nobler minds among the Jews, that the religion of the future was to be found neither in the cold and often cynical materialism of the Sad-

ducee, nor in the hollow formalism of the Pharisee, endeavouring to tie the living faith of the present to the dead body of the past, and to revive, by the plea of authority, the obsolete doctrines of a less cultivated age; but that it was to be found in the right understanding of the spirit of Scripture, and in the belief in those ancient yet ever new doctrines of God's love for His creatures, of the fellowship of all nations, and of the duties of man to man throughout the world.

Had Antiochus Epiphanes stamped out the Jewish faith, no such development would have resulted. Had Judas Maccabæus lacked the genius through which he triumphed, the lessons of love and duty which were taught by Christianity would, humanly speaking, never have been proclaimed to the world.

APPENDIX.

GENEALOGY OF THE HASMONEAN FAMILY.



* Or Salome (Derenbourg Hist., p. 102).

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